

Chapter 1

THE BEGINNINGS--TO 1839

I

For a century and a half before its permanent settlement, Kalamazoo and its environs had known the presence of the white man. Long years ago, when the settlement at Kalamazoo was young, a grave was discovered near the site of the village. Over the grave had been erected a cross of red cedar, notched and spiked together with a rude, hand-forged nail. The cross was moss covered and partially decayed. No one among the earliest pioneers ~~of Kalamazoo~~ could recall anything of its origin, or of the person who rested beneath it. Mute evidence that long before the permanent settlers of Kalamazoo arrived here, the white man had already wandered over its prairies and through its oak openings and had died here.¹

Probably the first white men to come near the site of Kalamazoo were Robert Cavalier, Sieur de La Salle, and his small group of explorers. On November 1, 1679, La Salle had built a small fort on a bluff overlooking the mouth of the St. Joseph River. This fort was named Fort Miami, after the Indians who lived in the country at that time. La Salle left Fort Miami toward the end of March in 1680 and crossed the present Kalamazoo, Calhoun, Jackson and Washtenaw Counties. From then on, until they were driven out

by the English, Frenchmen undoubtedly crossed and recrossed this part of Michigan. Indeed, French influence remained dominant in southwestern Michigan for three quarters of a century.

The French Jesuits began their missionary work on the St. Joseph River in the early 1680's. Some time before 1690, they established the St. Joseph Mission, just south of the present city of Niles. In 1691 the French built a fort on the St. Joseph River, near the mission.

But long before the earliest white man came, man had been here and had left his mark. Scattered throughout southwestern Michigan were mounds and what the early settlers called garden beds. These garden beds, of which over thirty were found, were low ridges of soil, up to eighteen inches high. These beds were in almost perfect geometric patterns, rectangular and circular. None or very few Indian artifacts were found in connection with these beds and mounds. They were the work of an unknown people; the Indians of a century or two ago had no legend or tradition concerning them. Unfortunately, by 1880 most of these beds had been destroyed by the farmer's plow and little or no scientific investigation was ever made of them.

According to Henry Little and other early settlers, an area of eight to ten acres south of the Mound in the present Bronson Park was entirely covered with these garden beds. One of them was perfectly circular, with paths corresponding to the spokes of a wheel. It was about a hundred feet in diameter and overgrown with burr oaks.

Although the whole of southwestern Michigan was rich in game and maple forests and mild in climate, it does not appear that the population of this area was large. It has been estimated that ~~pos-~~

Indians

~~sibly~~ there were no more than 15,000 when the Frenchmen first arrived. Southwestern Michigan, however, was a prize for which Indian tribes had long been contending. The most dreaded of those who invaded the area were the Iroquois of the Five Nations from the east, who periodically would come on killing, stealing and enslaving raids. And from west of Lake Michigan came the war parties of the Sioux or Dakota.

When the English and later the Americans arrived, the Potawatomes were the dominant Indians. Somewhere around 1700, when the power of the Miamis, the most powerful tribe when the French came to the country, had been weakened by a minor war with the Ottawas and the French, the Potawatomes migrated from the land west of Lake Michigan into the St. Joseph valley and from there spread into the Kalamazoo River valley. The raids of the Sioux may have forced them to move eastward.²

Between the Potawatomes and the other tribes in southwestern Michigan and others parts of the State there seems to have been considerable trade and communication. Where Kalamazoo now stands was the greatest center of Indian trails or paths in southwestern Michigan; no less than twelve and possibly as many as eighteen trails converged at this point. It is said that there were sixteen different trails centering at the old trading post, near the ford of the Kalamazoo River, in what is now Riverside Cemetery. In 1832, ~~what is now~~ Michigan Avenue, was an Indian trail, passing off to the north ~~to the north~~ to the fording place on the river, just west of Riverside Cemetery.

The main roads leading to Kalamazoo were laid out on the general course of these old Indian trails. These trails were usually two feet wide and as much as eight inches deep.³

One of the mysteries of the early history of Kalamazoo is the date for the establishment of the first trading post, near the ford of the Kalamazoo River.

When he was an old man, Gurdon Saltonstall Hubbard wrote that he had spent the winter of 1820/21 in what is now Kalamazoo, trading for the American Fur Company. Hubbard was only eighteen years old then and said that he did not know who had built the rude post that was there when he arrived. Sixty years later he revisited the site and said that he recognized it.⁴

Rix Robinson, another pioneer Indian trader, wrote in 1866 that "the first little trading hut at Kalamazoo was erected by Numai-ville in the fall of 1823, and in the fall of 1824 I caused more substantial buildings to be erected." Robinson also recalled that this post was closed-out in 1837. Henry Little remembered seeing the two buildings in 1831, which he described as rude, cheap, and inconvenient, and said that Hubbard had occupied them from the fall of 1819 to the spring of 1820.⁵

There is evidence, however, that over twenty years before Hubbard, Numaiville, or Robinson had traded in the vicinity of what is now Kalamazoo, traders were already in the area. On March 5, 1795, Alexander McKenzie, an employee of the Indian Department as interpreter and messenger to the Powatomies of St. Joseph and the neighboring villages, wrote to Alexander McKee, British Superintendent of Indian Affairs at Detroit: "Having left Detroit on the 5th of February last, I arrived on the 9th at the home of a trader named Papan on the Kekelamazoe river..." He further states in his report that he prevailed upon two French traders to go with him to Kekalamazoe and that he arrived there on February 11 ~~Kekelamazoe~~ and went to the house of Mr. Burrill.

That this was the present site of Kalamazoo or some point near it is further established by the inference from McKenzie's report that the place he visited was on the old traveled line from Detroit to St. Joseph and on the most direct route likely to be followed during the winter season from Fort Wayne to Muskegon.⁶

Thus there is evidence that the site of Kalamazoo was already a desirable spot when Titus Bronson decided that here was the place where he would settle, and possibly found a county seat.

II

The settlement of southwestern Michigan was delayed for a decade because it was quite generally believed that this area was not suitable for settlement.

In 1815, Gen. Edward Tiffin, surveyor-general of the United States, described the two million acres of land that had been set aside in the Michigan Territory for veterans of the War of 1812 as low, wet land, with a very thick growth of underbrush and swamps interspersed throughout the whole country. Then he continued:

Taking the country altogether as far as has been explored, and to all appearance together with information received covering the balance is as bad--there would be not more than one acre in a hundred, if there were one out of a thousand that would in any case admit of cultivation.⁷

Kalamazoo County was surveyed between 1826 and 1830, Schoolcraft and Brady Townships being surveyed in 1826.⁸

Although General Tiffin had painted a dark picture of southwestern Michigan, the pioneers of the country later remembered it as a beautiful country. H. G. Wells recalled that the prairies of Michigan were lovely and colorful with wild flowers, and other pioneers described it as an immense park, with scarcely any underbrush and no grubs or small trees.⁹

Volney Hascall, editor of the Kalamazoo Gazette for many years,

whose family settled on Genessee Prairie, four miles southwest of Kalamazoo, in June 1831, recalled twenty-five years later that deer, bear and wolves were seen in all directions. Soon after arriving here, they were told that there were inexhaustible fields of strawberries on Grand Prairie. He said that

Some deserted corn fields, left by the Indians a year or two before, had grown over with rank and luxuriant strawberry vines. These at times were literally loaded with fruit and the little hillocks where the corn had stood, for acres and acres, gleamed red in the sun, as though each might be a bona fide heap of luscious berries, already plucked and placed there.¹⁰

T. S. AtLee, the Major Red Pepper of the early Kalamazoo press, a social leader of the village, and for many years connected with the U.S. Land Office, described twenty years later how the prairies around Kalamazoo had looked to him in 1835:

I can never forget the vivid impression made upon my mind (fresh as I then was from city scenes and life) the first time I looked upon the prairie in full bloom--I had mounted my horse for an afternoon ride, and heading westward from our village, gave my favorite running nag Lightfoot free rein until I drew up suddenly on the brow of the hill near Uncle Parker's, near Grand Prairie;--for it seemed to me almost like sacrilege, to crush with my horse's hoofs the lovely and delicate fairy children of the woods and fields, by which I was surrounded. Beneath, about, and beyond me, as far as eye could reach, was spread out, in undulating elegance, an emerald carpet of nature's choicest fabric, inlaid profusely with flowers of every imaginable variety of name and tint--georgous and fascinating as the most brilliant hues of the rainbow.¹¹

By 1825 land was getting scarce and the land-hungry men of eastern United States began looking beyond the settlements of Ohio, Indiana and eastern Michigan. Southwestern Michigan appeared attractive and in the fall of 1828, Bazel Harrison,* with a small party settled on Prairie Ronde, near Harrison Lake.¹²

* Harrison was a nephew of Benjamin Harrison, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and a cousin of Gen William Henry Harrison. He was 58 years old when he came to Prairie Ronde and was the first judge of the county court. He died at Prairie Ronde on August 30, 1874, at the age of 103 years.

The town of White Pigeon, which was named for a noted chief of the Potawatomi nation, in St. Joseph County was founded in the spring of 1827 and in a year or two was a respectable settlement.¹²

III

Two years later the settlement of Kalamazoo was begun. Although one or two other men may have been here as early or perhaps slightly earlier, ^{Kalamazoo} owes its beginnings to Titus Bronson. Bronson was a member of that restless breed of men who pioneered much, but were not appreciated until later.

He was born November 27, 1788, of a pioneer Connecticut family, in the town of Middlebury, Connecticut. In 1825 or 1826 he left Middlebury and moved to Ohio. He introduced the famous Neshanock potato to Michigan and because he raised seven hundred bushels of potatoes on a single acre in Washtenaw County, he was known as Potato Bronson. He sold these potatoes for a high price and used the money to buy the land where Kalamazoo now stands.

Those who knew Bronson regarded him as a very eccentric man. He was exceedingly thin and spare, very dark and his face wore a perpetual grin. He was very comical in appearance and manners, starting and running on any little occasion. Walking by fits and starts, he would sometimes stop suddenly, take off his coat and start off on a run, but before he had gone far, he would stop and put his coat on again. He was slovenly in his general appearance and although he pretended to shave, his face seldom showed it.¹³

He was a fast talker and knew a great deal about many things. When talking he gave his opinions without stint and maintained them without fear or flinching. Col. F. W. Curtenius said of him:

His mind was a store-house of historical facts, strangely mingled with chimeras... Few men possessed a memory so tenacious of whatever came within its grasp. Reading was to him a source of infinite pleasure, and whatever he read, was treasured up, apparently without an effort, and could be referred to years afterwards with reliability.¹⁴

Although Bronson was a natural frontiersman and loved the ways of the frontier better than town life, he used neither liquor nor tobacco and was bitter and outspoken in his denunciation of those who did. He was absolutely honest and detested politicians.¹⁵

Two anecdotes, reported by H. G. Wells at the first pioneer reunion, thirty-five years after Bronson left Kalamazoo, give a little more substance to the picture ~~as here~~ of Bronson.

In the year of Grace, 1835, in the month of May at Schoolcraft, Titus Bronson, standing in the highway, said in his quick way, to a little knot of auditors, I among the number, 'The man or boy now lives who will travel in a single day, between sunrise and sunset, by steam from Detroit to Chicago.'

An occasional jar occurred in the Bronson household, for both heads of the family would contend for the mastery. Some of those who witnessed these little diversions, would always insist that the 'gray mare was the better horse.'

Once upon a time, after a heated discussion in the household, in the presence of several gentlemen, who boarded with them, Uncle Titus yielded to the force of circumstances, quietly removed his nether garments and with arms extended, presented them to his spouse, exclaiming, 'Take the breeches, Sally, for I see you are determined to wear them.'¹⁶

Sometime during the month of June in 1829, Bronson came to Kalamazoo by way of the old Indian trail from Ann Arbor. He crossed the river at the ford, near the old French trading post, and headed west. He camped at the Indian Mound, in what is now Bronson Park, and looked upon the garden beds that covered the acres south of it. After looking over the surrounding country, he decided that this was the place for him to settle down. There were those who believed him to have decided there and then that this was to be a city, bearing his name and they had him exclaim to himself as he stood on the Mound, "This will be the County Seat." One thing is certain, though, Bronson

believed enthusiastically in the future of the settlement that he founded.¹⁷

Somewhere near the Mound he built a hut of tamarack poles, covered with grass and lived there until cold weather set in. Then he went to the settlement on Prairie Ronde. The following spring he went to Ohio to get his wife, daughter and his brother-in-law, Stephen Richardson, in a covered wagon. They did not, however, stay at Bronson, for his wife became ill and he took her to live with friends on Prairie Ronde during the winter.

Early in the spring of 1831 he returned and built a log house, which probably stood somewhere near the southeast corner of what is now Water and Church Streets.* On March 12, 1831, Bronson and Richardson filed their claim at the land office at White Pigeon. The legal description of their plat reads as the east half of the southwest quarter of section 15, township 2 south, range 11 west.¹⁸

The legal organization of Kalamazoo County had already been affected. The county, with its present limits, was set off by an act of the Territorial Council on October 29, 1829, and with nearly all of the western half of the Territory, was attached to St. Joseph county for judicial purposes. On June 30, 1830, the county was organized as a separate entity, with the present counties of Calhoun, Barry and Eaton attached to it for judicial purposes.¹⁹ The seat of justice was at the home of Abraham I. Shaver in the township of Brady, which previously had comprised all of Kalamazoo and Barry Counties.¹⁹

By the spring of 1831, Bronson already had a number of settlers.

* Most of the pioneers agreed that Bronson's log house stood on the corner of Church and Water Streets, but they were unable to agree whether it was the southwest or the southeast corner.

As early as the spring of 1829, Cyrus Lovell had pitched his tent where the court house now stands, at least that was the way he remembered it in 1874; other pioneers, however, disputed his claim. William Harris was the first actual settler in Kalamazoo with a family; he came here in the spring of 1830. Sometime during the year Nathan Harrison located on the Kalamazoo River, near Portage Creek and established a ferry. Most of the actual operation of the ferry seems to have been done by his wife.²⁰

For a few months the chief item of interest to the settlers in the county was the location of the county seat. On January 15, 1831, the two men who had been appointed by Governor Lewis Cass to locate the county seat for Kalamazoo County, reported to the governor. Their report described the location of the future court house as "A spot... selected on an eminence near the center of the south west quarter of section 15, township two south, of range eleven west, owned by Titus Bronson, Esq." The report went on to say:

Mr. Bronson has agreed to lay out a village and place upon the proper records, a plan or map thereof, duly acknowledged, with the following places of land properly marked and set apart in said map or plan for public use, viz., One square of sixteen rods for the Court House; one square of sixteen rods for a jail; one square of sixteen rods for an academy; one square of eight rods for common schools; and one square of two acres for a public burial ground; and four squares of eight rods each for the first religious denominations that become incorporated in said village agreeable to the Statute of the Territory.

On May 12, 1831, Acting Governor Stevens T. Mason officially confirmed this location and the little village of Bronson became the county seat of Kalamazoo County.²¹

Although he knew that Bronson had already been given the county seat, Horace H. Comstock, who came to Kalamazoo County in 1831, believed that his settlement had the best location and he used his influence and considerable wealth to have Stevens' confirmation rescinded. In Comstock's opinion, "Nothing was to be feared from

the pretended rivalry of that half-crazy, eccentric Bronson, way down there by the river." Bronson's place, Comstock was convinced, "was geographically wrong; it was low and wet, and would be unhealthy, and besides all that, Bronson was entirely alone, and without money, and friends and influence." Everything seemed to be on Comstock's side: he had the right location, money, friends and influence; yet Bronson kept the county seat.²²

For many years no one questioned the contributions of Titus Bronson to Kalamazoo. Then on March 12, 1886, the Gazette published an article under the headline, "A Local Iconoclast." This article reported the claim of a certain Colonel Smith that Bronson was a "stupendous old fraud." The story claimed that he did not give the park, courthouse site and other public grounds to the city or county; that it was Bronson's brother-in-law, Stephen Richardson, who owned the land where the park and public buildings now are, and that it wasn't Bronson's to give.²³

From the old records it is clear that Richardson owned the land which is now Bronson Park and also some of the other land that is now public property. What the relationships between the two men were is probably impossible to determine at this late date, but it is known that Bronson had great confidence in the future of the settlement he had founded and that Richardson's name is not mentioned in the campaign to locate the county seat at Bronson. Then there is an old map of the village which gives both the names of Bronson and Richardson on the lots that are now occupied by the Park, the Court House and the churches.

IV

In the fall of 1831, Bronson was a settlement of a few log houses; in fact, it never was much of a log-house settlement and

there probably were never more than four or five log houses in the village.

The first frame building was Col. Hosea B. Huston's store, which stood on what is now the northeast corner of Michigan and North Rose. How much of a building this store was is uncertain. One pioneer called it a shanty, another one, a very respectable two-story frame building. It must, however, have been a fairly substantial structure, for it was still standing fifty years later. The first stock of goods opened in the county was at Schoolcraft by the firm of Smith, Huston and Brown in 1830. A year later the same firm opened a stock of goods at Bronson, Huston reportedly taking about three wheel barrows of goods from the store on Prairie Ronde. Even though the stock in the store was limited, the settlers were happy, because it was no longer necessary to depend on the old trading post.²⁴

In the fall of 1831 or the winter of 1831 and 1832, Cyrus (also Cyrene) Burdick and his brother Gen. Justus Burdick began the construction of the Kalamazoo House. It was built from lumber saved in Bronson's sawmill, which was located on Portage Creek, about where Reed Street now crosses the creek. The Kalamazoo House was originally a building 30 x 40 feet, with a two-story veranda in the front. It stood on the north side of Main Street, just opposite Portage Street and was for many years the most important hotel in Kalamazoo.; it was opened to the public in 1832. Many of the important gatherings of pioneer Kalamazoo were held in this building.

In July 1832 Bronson secured its first post office with the appointment of Dr. Jonathan G. Abbott as the first postmaster. Dr. Abbott had his office in Huston's store and he and his family lived

upstairs.²⁶

As the summer of 1832 began, Bronson was still an insignificant settlement: a few log houses, a frame store and hotel, and possibly a frame house, built by *Cyrus* Lovell. This house stood near what is now court house square. With the exception of the Kalamazoo House, what there was of the little village was west of Burdick Street. Beyond the Kalamazoo House was the cabin and ferry of Harrison and across the river, the old French trading post.²⁷

Civil government began in Bronson in 1832. The Territorial Legislature authorized the first election for the township of Arcadia, which comprised most of the northern half of Kalamazoo County, to be held at the house of Titus Brown. This act was held to be in error and the election was held in April at the home of Titus Bronson. An act approved June 18, 1832, stated that this election and all the proceedings of this meeting were "legalized and made valid as if the election had been held at the house of Titus Brown."²⁸

V

Moving the U.S. Land Office from White Pigeon to Bronson was one of the greatest factors in booming the population of the little settlement. The land office had opened at White Pigeon on June 6, 1831, it was closed April 29, 1834, moved to Bronson, and sales began there on May 2. At this time and for several years afterward, Major Abraham Edwards was the Register and T. C. Sheldon, the Receiver of Public Moneys.

The exact location of the old land office is uncertain. When the office was first moved to Bronson, it probably stood on Main Street, nearly opposite the Kalamazoo House. At this time it was a little white building with slender columns in front. It may have stood here until 1836, when it was moved to Edwards Street, where

it stood until torn down in 1899, forgotten by almost everyone. Since everyone knew where the Land Office was, its location was never precisely specified in the records of the day. It is known, however, that Albert A. Smith had a valuable house and lot on No. 112 Main, one door east of the Land Office, for sale, and it is possible to locate lot number 112. Therefore it seem reasonable to assume that the Land Office stood somewhere near the northeastern corner of Main and Edwards.²⁹

Land buyers and speculators streamed into Bronson. In the summer of 1836, "the entire square in front of the Kalamazoo House, extending almost to South Street was white with the tents of land lookers." Food and lodging were in great demand and the two hotels, the Kalamazoo House and Johnson Patrick's Exchange Hotel, which stood on the northwest corner of North Rose and Main, were unable to take care of all of the business and many of the local residents provided lodging and sold pies and other food. The rush of business was so great at the Land Office that extra clerks had to be called in and sometimes this extra help did not suffice and the office had to be closed down for a time, so that the applications could be processed.³⁰

In order to keep the picket fence and other of his property from being whittled away by the many Yankee "blades," Major Edwards bought a load of shingles and told the crowd that every man might help himself and whittle away to his heart's content.³¹

Most of the land bought at Bronson seems to have been paid for in gold and silver, instead of "wild cat" bank issues. Although thousands and hundreds of thousands of dollars exchanged hands and, in spite of the fact that both government and private money was handled very carelessly, no robberies seem to have occurred. Buyers

would come in with their saddle bags filled with money and upon asking the hotel clerk where to put them, were told to throw them under the counter. When the man would come to claim his property, he was told to look for it and when he had found it, he would go on his way.³²

During the boom years of the mid 1830's, the Bronson Land Office was one of the busiest places in the United States. Here most of the land in southwestern Michigan was sold. According to Land Office records, nearly three million acres of land were sold here during the years of 1834 to 1837, at a value of nearly \$3,500,000.. In 1835, \$931,875.22 worth of public land was sold at Bronson. This, the editor of the Michigan Statesman claimed, was the greatest sale that had occurred at any land office in the United States, being one-tenth of all the sales of the sixty land offices in the country. And in 1835 the sale of land was more than twice that of the previous year. By July 1837 most of the land in Kalamazoo County had been sold; only 27,036 acres were still for sale.³³

During the 1830's much public land was sold in Michigan and its population increased rapidly. The population of Michigan was 87,000 in 1834; three years later it had nearly doubled.

These years were also boom years for the country as a whole. In 1834, four million acres of public land were sold; in 1835, fifteen million; and in 1836, twenty million acres. Most of this land was sold at \$1.25 an acre. It was during these years that the phrase "doing a land office business" became part of the language of the American people.

VI

By the end of 1835, much of the business that was in Bronson had followed the Kalamazoo House and the Land Office to the eastern

~~had followed the Kalamazoo House and the Land Office to the eastern~~
 part of the village. Huston moved his store to a barn that he had
 moved ~~to the~~ southeast corner of Main and Portage and remodeled.
 This store was known for years as Old Brig 97. Besides Huston's
 store, there seem to have been two other stores--the general store
 of Isaac Willard, which stood one door east of the Kalamazoo House,
 and the country store of R. M'Intosh, which was opposite the Kalama-
 zoo House and just below it. M'Intosh had tried to close his store
 out in the fall of 1835, but he evidently had not succeeded, for he
 was still in business months later. Another business that is men-
 tioned in the old advertisements was the cabinet shop of Isaac V
 Vickery on Main Street, near the county clerk's office, whose loca-
 tion is unknown.³⁴

Titus Bronson and his family now lived in their new frame
 house on the northeast corner of Church and Main and Epaphroditus
 (also Epaphros) Ransom lived in Bronson's log house. Ransom, who
 began his political career in Bronson as pathmaster, became a justice
 of the Michigan Supreme Court and later chief justice, and in 1847
 was elected governor of the State by every county in Michigan. Ran-
 som was the only man from Kalamazoo to be elected governor of the
 State. He later bought a farm just south of Lovell Street.

T. C. Sheldon lived in the beautiful grove that stood on the
~~present location of Gilmore's parking lot on Portage and South~~
 Streets. This grove was the scene of many pioneer picnics. Dr.
 Abbott, the postmaster, had a house built near the site of the pre-
 sent Civic Auditorium, on the corner of South and South Park ^{Streets}; Dr.
 Fletcher Ransom's house stood where the Bauman Block now stands on
 North Burdick Street, between Michigan and South Streets.³⁵

Originally it was planned for Kalamazoo Avenue to be the main

street, but for some reason business did not develop there. One of the legends of Kalamazoo is that General Burdick and the other owners of the Kalamazoo House went so far as to twist the streets of the village into an ungeometrical Y for no other reason than to converge travel and patronage from the east and south into that part of town and to that particular hotel. And that is perhaps as good an explanation for East Michigan's bending to north at Portage as any that we have.³⁶

Although the population of Bronson seems to have been small, the assessment roll of 1835 lists the names of about one hundred fifty taxpayers, many of whom must have been residents of the township or county. In this old record, Titus Bronson was assessed for 390 acres, valued at \$1,320; Bronson, Burdick and Huston for eighty acres, with a valuation of \$1,200; H. H. Comstock for 1,260 acres; H. B. Huston, sheriff of the county, 207 acres; and Thomas C. Sheldon and Company ^{were} assessed for 350 acres and 250 village lots, with a total value of \$6,200. Even though the country was new, there were already people in the county who found themselves in financial difficulties; this is indicated by a notice published in the Michigan Statesman that land was to be sold for delinquent taxes on the first Monday in October 1835.³⁷

VII

In September 1835, Bronson acquired a newspaper, The Michigan Statesman, and October 2 was the date for the first issue at Bronson. The paper had been established as the Michigan Statesman and St. Joseph Chronicle at White Pigeon by John D. Frees in December 1833. In June 1834 he sold it to Henry Gilbert. Frees was for many years after this the public printer in Washington.

His farewell to his patrons expresses eloquently the progress

this part of Michigan was making:

The population increased rapidly,--and the wilderness, in its stead we now meet with cultivated fields--and, instead of the few rude and scattering cabins, we now see many comfortable houses.--Villages are springing as with the power of magic, and everything bears the impress of unparalleled improvement. This must be a great country... And just a little more than two years ago this country had just begun to attract the attention of the emigrant.³⁸

In giving his reasons for moving the paper from White Pigeon to Bronson, Gilbert stated that Bronson would be a more convenient point in the district and that it would give greater publicity to his paper. He also was convinced that the citizens of Bronson and vicinity would not do without a paper, and since the country could not support three newspapers, he had felt it advisable to move ~~to Bronson~~. The name of the paper was changed to the Kalamazoo Gazette in December 1836 or January 1837. January 23 seems to have been the first issue as the Gazette.³⁹

Printing a newspaper in those days was a precarious financial venture; at least that is the way the publishers described it. In February 1835, an amusing notice appeared in the Statesman. The title of the notice was "Short Stories" and consisted of the following three short stories:

No. 1 Short. - The Michigan Statesman has been published upwards for one year.

No. 2. Shorter. - Some subscribers have as yet paid nothing.

No. 3. Shortest. - We would thank them to pay.⁴⁰

-- The incorporation of the Kalamazoo Mutual Insurance Company in 1834 and that of the Branch Bank of Michigan the following year were further indications of growth and progress. The bank was located in Huston's old store. Thomas C. Sheldon was president and George F. Porter, the cashier, who lived in the same building. The directors of the bank were Isaac Adams, J. Ullman, James Smith, Jr.,

Hosea B. Huston and Epaphros Ransom. The bank opened for business on Monday, March 2, 1835, and its hours were from 1 to 4.⁴¹

In the spring or early summer of the same year, the first bridge was built across the Kalamazoo River. The necessity for a bridge had been felt from the beginning of the settlement, but the cost frightened the people. When the government offered to furnish half of the money, the bridge was built, at a cost of \$500.

The most urgent problem facing the people who were streaming into southwestern Michigan was a profitable means of marketing their produce. To have any value, wheat had to be gotten to Buffalo, New York, from where it could be taken to New York City by way of the Erie Canal. If his claim is correct, E. Lakin Brown of Schoolcraft was the first man to take a keel boat of wheat down the Paw Paw River to St. Joseph in 1834. But one load of wheat seems to have been the end of that enterprise. Two years later Lucius Lyon, T. C. Sheldon, Justus and Cyrus Burdick, H. B. Huston and Sherman and Winslow formed a company to navigate the Kalamazoo River. The company built a flatboat, but this venture ended when the boat was wrecked on its first trip.⁴²

Consequently, barter remained the best method of marketing one's crop for several more years.

In the fall of 1835, Isaac Vickery advertised that he would exchange furniture for 5,000 feet of first-rate cherry, black walnut and whitewood lumber. The Kalamazoo Gazette offered to trade subscriptions for wood. Isaac W. Willard offered to pay a dollar for a bushel of good wheat, fifty cents for shelled corn and 37½¢ for oats, and he continued, "Most other kinds of country Produce received in exchange for Goods." In January 1836, H. B. Huston

informed the readers of the Gazette that he wanted "quick 75,000 bushels of wheat, oats, and corn, and a cellar full of pork." Prime beef steaks cost six and seven cents a pound.⁴³

In the spring of 1836, the firm of Wadsworth and Thompson decided to put in a line of coaches from Marshall to Kalamazoo. The entire population of Kalamazoo, which thirty years later was estimated at 150, awaited the arrival of the stagecoach. Every eye strained to see the coach come over the slight rise from the river, and when it came, the driver blew his tin horn and the stagecoach rumbled up to the door of the post office in Willard's store.⁴⁴

VIII.

For six years the name of the little village near the ford of the Kalamazoo River had been called Bronson, after the name of its founder. Then on March 2, 1836, the Legislature of the State enacted a law changing the name of the township from Arcadia to Kalamazoo and the name of the village from Bronson to Kalamazoo. The law went into effect on March 31. In the April 2 issue of his paper, the editor of the Statesman, referring to the recent change of the name of the village, made this comment: "This is as it should be--- our County, Township, village now have the same name. Kalamazoo was the name given our noble river and a beautiful prairie which it laves, by the aborigines of the country."⁴⁵

The real reason for this change of name probably will never be known for certain. The explanations for the change were made forty or fifty years later. The favored explanation is that Gen. Justus Burdick, Thomas C. Sheldon, and Lucius Lyon, an enterprising promoter, politician and businessman, who had become joint proprietors of the village with Titus Bronson, had become impatient with the latter's peculiarities and lack of enterprise and had persuaded the Michigan Legislature to change the name from Bronson to

Kalamazoo. Another version is that Burdick and Sheldon thought that Bronson was too common a name for such a beautiful spot and therefore asked the Legislature to change its name. Then there is the story that the confusion arising over the similarity of Bronson and Bronson Prairie in Branch County led some of the people in Bronson to petition the Post Office Department to change the name to Kalamazoo. When this was done, Bronson Prairie dropped the Prairie in its name. And it should also be noted that the name Bronson was never confirmed by law.⁴⁶

Then the legends, that are coupled with this change of the village's name, go on to say that this change broke Titus Bronson's heart and he sold out all of his interests, for a good price, and left Kalamazoo, never to return. When and why Bronson left Kalamazoo is not a matter of record. It is true that he had had great faith in the future of the settlement he had founded, and he had been generous with his donations to the village. Undoubtedly the change in name hurt his feelings, but that this was the only, or even the real reason for his leaving ~~is leaving~~ is doubtful.⁴⁷

Bronson was a restless frontiersman and there is some evidence that a year or two before the name change, he was already feeling himself crowded and felt that he must go where there was more elbow room. And, according to F. W. Curtenius, Bronson's eccentricity, "coupled with an abrupt and unfortunate freedom of speech, reckless of his audience, begat in the minds of many a bitter dislike for him." Therefore it is likely that no one had any serious compunctions about hurting his feelings.⁴⁸

His own generation was unable to appreciate him; that was left to a later generation. H. G. Wells said of him, "Bronson was an eccentric but honest man, and if we appreciated his character and had a fair show of liberality, we would place a monument to his

memory on the Mound." 49

Cyrus Lovell, who had known Bronson well and had been his attorney in one of the first lawsuits tried at Bronson, summed up his character in the following words:

He kept everybody that came to his house, especially the ministers; was a friend to the religion of the Bible and to the human race; was just and liberal and ready always to do his share in every good work. He was public spirited and patriotic. He furnished me his horse, saddle, and bridle and powder-horn, ball-pouch, powder, balls, and a rifle, and directed me to go and see what matter was with Black Hawk in 1832. In short, Titus Bronson was an honest, good and useful man. He injured no man, but was often wronged. Kalamazoo would be just as large as she is now, if called Bronson. A rose by another name would smell just as sweet.

After leaving Kalamazoo, the Bronson family went to Rock Island, Illinois, but soon they crossed the Mississippi and were among the first settlers of Davenport, Iowa. Here Bronson lived for some years, owning a magnificent farm. If he had been able to keep this land, he would have been a millionaire, but he was swindled out of it. About this time his wife died and it is possible that her death contributed to his losing the farm, for her business sense was better than his. Those who knew the Bronsons while they lived at Kalamazoo said that Mrs. Bronson had to be in on every business deal. Bronson lost his Iowa farm about 1842 and being penniless, he had to go to his children for support. In the fall of 1852 he went east to visit his relatives in Middlebury, Connecticut, and died there in January 1853, happy that he was able to spend the last months of his life in the company of friends and relatives. On his tombstone was placed this epitaph: " Western Pioneer, returned to sleep with his fathers." 50

IX

By the beginning of 1836, Kalamazoo was no longer a rude pioneer settlement. Its prospects may not have been as bright as the editor of the Statesman tried to make them appear, but even when we

discount his optimism, it must be admitted that Kalamazoo was growing.

In April 1836, he boasted,

The healthfulness of Kalamazoo is proverbial. But four adults have died within its precincts since its settlement and one of them was an aged traveller who came here sick.

He did not say how many infants and children had died during this period, but considering the high infant and child mortality rates of the day, one may assume that there were many more than four.

Not only the climate, but also the site of Kalamazoo caused the editor to wax poetic:

The site is a beautiful Burr Oak Plain, directly on the bank of the river from which its name is derived, with a gentle acclivity receding from the water's edge. The little Arcadia, clear and pure as a mountain brook, runs through the village on its northern side. At the foot of Portage street, on the southerly side, passes Portage River--a fine, limpid stream...

Speaking of its growth and economic progress, he declaimed that in less than two years the village had grown from a few log cabins and frame houses to about sixty dwelling houses, many of them large and well finished and tenanted with a population of many hundreds. There were also three large public houses, and a fourth to be opened in a few weeks, six stores, most of them large and substantially built and filled with good stocks of merchandise, one drug store, one shoe store, a bank and a land office, "at which there has been more land sold, during the past year, than has ever been sold in the same period, at any Office in the United States."

Among the population of Kalamazoo, he continued, were thirty to forty carpenters, house joiners, four brick and stone masons, besides cabinet makers, painters, blacksmiths, tailors, a glazier, a gold and silversmith, two clergymen, six (briefless) lawyers, and three physicians, "with little employment." 51

Among the other indications of progress that he noted was the authorization by the State Legislature of a loan for the erection of a court house and jail. A year later he reported that contracts had been let for the erection of "a large and spacious Court House. It is to be built at the west end of the village, on the Public-Square, 42 feet front by 44 feet deep." Then there were plans for an educational institution in the village, the Michigan and Huron Institute, which had been incorporated upon the manual labor system. Trustees, the editor reported, had bought a large and beautiful farm adjoining the village and the buildings were to be built soon and instruction was to begin on September 1.

Nor did he forget to mention that the village also had "a large and commodious School-House, in which a well conducted common school is kept most of the time, affording means of instruction to near one hundred children."

A year later he listed some fifty businesses, professions and institutions as being represented in the village. Among these were four large, convenient, and well-conducted taverns, one grist mill, one saw mill (with three grist mills and six sawmills within three miles of the village), one distillery, one brewery, eleven dry goods stores, three provision stores, one printing office, one bookstore, three saddle and harness shops, three tailor shops, three blacksmith shops, one tannery, one currier shop, two wagon makers, one turning shop, one sheet iron manufactory, one chair factory, and one plough factory.

In addition to the above, Kalamazoo had one Presbyterian meeting house, two ministers of the gospel, one seminary for learning, one teacher of French and drawing, one mutual insurance company against loss of fire, four doctors, three lawyers, one engineer and eight land agents. 52

"The population of Kalamazoo," he went on to say, "is estimated at from 1,000 to 1,200. When it is remembered that but four years ago this place was almost a wilderness, only four solitary log huts to be seen around here, it will be readily admitted that Kalamazoo has increased at a rapid rate." It seems obvious, however, that the editor had permitted his enthusiasm to get the better of his judgment. If it is true that the population of the township was estimated at 1,367 in 1838 and that of the village at 1,800 six years later, it is extremely doubtful that its population was a thousand in 1837.⁵³

Yet it is evident that Kalamazoo had come a long ways from the primitive settlement of four years earlier, even when one allows for the editor's over-optimistic reporting. But as one reads the old issues of the Gazette and later those of the Telegraph also, one cannot but realize that the editors of these papers believed in the future of Kalamazoo and were among its greatest boosters and promoters. Kalamazoo owes much to its early editors, who were both the conscience and spur of the village.

The first decade of Kalamazoo's history closed with bright prospects, although the panic that began in the early months of 1837 caused great hardships to many of its residents. The Gazette of 1839 lists many tracts of land being sold for taxes and the foreclosure of a large number of mortgages.

X

During the years that Kalamazoo was changing from a primitive pioneer village to a bustling and growing village, the Territory of Michigan, which had been organized in 1805, was also growing. By 1835 the people of the Territory felt that they were ready for statehood.

On March 9, 1835, a Democratic convention of delegates from

the several townships of Kalamazoo County was held at the Kalamazoo House for the purpose of nominating suitable persons to the Constitutional Convention. The Whigs must have held a convention also, but the Statesman, being an ardent Democratic paper, did not deign to notice that proceeding. We know that Hezekiah G. Wells, a young Whig lawyer who had arrived in Kalamazoo in 1833, and who later was to achieve both local and national prominence, was a member of the Constitutional Convention that met in Detroit on May 11, 1835. A constitution was drafted and adopted and later in the year Michigan applied for admission to the Union, but a boundary dispute with Ohio delayed admission. The bloodless "Toledo War" resulted in Ohio's being awarded a strip of land from Lake Erie westward at the latitude of Toledo, and as a compensation for this loss of territory, Michigan received the entire upper peninsula. Michigan was formally admitted into the Union as its twenty-sixth State on January 26, 1837.⁵⁴

XI

Since most of the early settlers of Kalamazoo were religious men and women, religion early became an important part of the life of the people. The first minister to see Bronson was Thomas Ward Merrill, a young Baptist preacher, who rode into the clearing where Titus Bronson's house stood in the summer of 1830.

Probably the first religious service conducted in Bronson was that held by J. T. Robe, junior preacher of the Wayne Circuit, in the home of Bronson in 1832. A year or two later a union Sunday School was held in the schoolhouse on east South Street. The school consisted of twenty-five scholars and five teachers, who represented the Methodist, Congregational, Presbyterian and Episcopal denominations.

The first religious group to be organized at Bronson^{son} was that

of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Although J. T. Robe had preached at Bronson, he had not formed a class, but in 1833 Richard Meek organized a class of eight, whose membership grew considerably during the following year. For the next nine years the little society met first in the home of Titus Bronson, then at the home of George Patterson, and finally in the schoolhouse. Not until 1842 was the congregation able to build a church. Then its members erected a neat frame building on the corner of Church and Academy Streets, where the First Reformed Church now stands. Although Titus Bronson had set aside four lots for the use of the first four churches to be incorporated, the records of the First Methodist Church state that the land was given to the society by Justus Burdick.⁵⁵

The First Congregational Church was organized on December 10, 1835, or February 3, 1836, as a Presbyterian Church; six years later the congregational form of church government was adopted. This group had the first church building at Bronson, its first meeting house being erected in 1836 by Deacon Martin Heydenbirk, who had come to Bronson in 1832.* This building was known for years as "Old Sessions" and stood just east of where the Public Library now stands. It is not known why the society did not build on church square. Later the building was moved to Rose and Water Streets and ended its years as a "rickety smithy" which was finally torn down in 1899.⁵⁶

In June 1835, the Rev. Jeremiah Hall came to Michigan and took up residence at Bronson. The following February he organized a

* Martin Heydenbirk was a stern old Puritan. He had been a missionary to the Indians at Mackinac and had worked on the Presbyterian churches at White Pigeon, Kalamazoo and Gull Prairie. He was a well-known carpenter in the early days of Kalamazoo and the house that he built in 1834 still stands at 400 Dingley Road. Heydenbirk lived in a little white house on St. John's Place and South Street.

Baptist church consisting of fourteen members, the first meeting probably being held at the farm home of Major Ezekiel Ransom. On February 6, 1837, a meeting was called at the schoolhouse for those interested in erecting a Baptist Church for the purpose of choosing a building committee. This building was constructed on the site where the First Baptist Church stands today.

About a month later, on March 11, 1837, the following notice appeared in the Gazette: "The Reverend Charles B. Stout of the Episcopal Church, will, by Divine permission, preach in the Presbyterian Church on Sunday afternoon next." Eleven days after this service, the first meeting of St. Luke's Episcopal Church was held. After its organization, the society wasted no time erecting a church, which was consecrated on September 13, 1837. The church was a small wooden structure that stood on the southeast corner of Park and Main Streets, where, until recently, the YMCA building stood for many years.⁵⁷

XII

conditions were

What living like in the 1830's is difficult for those who are living in the latter half of the twentieth century to imagine; life was hard and extremely precarious, especially for the young, for there were many uncontrolled diseases, and ~~there were~~^{few} labor-saving devices. But that the pioneers themselves realized how hard their lives were is doubtful; this was their life and they took it as it came. Not until years later, when the survivors were reminiscing at the annual pioneer reunions, did they realize how rugged ~~it~~^{life} had been.

Perhaps the most striking characteristic of ~~life~~^{human existence} in those long-ago years was its monotony, especially for the women and farmers. Women were kept busy with birthings, care of the children and primitive methods of preparing food and clothing. During the growing

and harvesting seasons farmers were completely occupied with their field work and about the only time that it was possible for them to get around was during the winter months when the sleighing was good; for during the fall and spring months such roads as there were were often impassable because of mud. And the shop keepers and laborers in the village also put in long hours; days that were twelve to sixteen hours long were not unusual.

Yet we must not think that the people who lived in Kalamazoo and the surrounding country in pioneer days were entirely without social life and entertainments. The churches and Sunday Schools provide a welcome relief for many from the tedium of the daily routine. The occasional church and Sunday School socials and school programs and picnics were always happy occasions. The women would delight in outdoing one another in the dishes prepared and then later comparing recipes and catching up on the latest gossip. The men would usually talk shop, unless there was some kind of political or economic crisis or problem. The children would play and gorge themselves on the abundance of delicacies and the young people would use the opportunity to begin or extend their courtships.

Strange as it may seem today, funerals were social events that nearly ranked in importance with weddings. Funerals, especially those of prominent people, were elaborate affairs.

When Dr. Seth I. Porter, aged thirty-one years and seven months, died at Bronson on August 23, 1834, "a large concourse assembled at his late residence to perform the funeral ceremonies." The funeral was held on Sunday. The funeral of Judge Cyren Burdick, who was one of the donors of the cemetery on West Street, now South Park Park, and who had died on October 26, 1837, at the age of thirty-seven, was an occasion of the most elaborate preparations and was attended

by many people. The pallbearers were distinguished by large sashes over the shoulder and immense "weeds" made from black and white cambric twined about their hats and falling with long ends down behind nearly to the ground. It is said that a number of Indians watched the funeral procession in mute astonishment.⁵⁸

But there were more joyful social events and entertainments. The common entertainments and sports were wolf fights, fox hunting and dancing. The first show held at Kalamazoo was held in the kitchen of the Kalamazoo House in 1834. The show consisted of a collection of wax figures, an old man performer, and a child singer. The Kalamazoo House and later the Court House were used for the few and far-between entertainments. The first public hall in the village was a room in the third story of Healey's store at 116 Main.

Undoubtedly the greatest spectacle of the day was the great circus at White Pigeon on Thursday, September 24, 1835. According to the advertisement, there were two spacious pavilions, each a hundred feet in diameter and large enough for 4,000 spectators. Among the sights to be seen were an elephant--six persons "may ride upon his back with safety and pleasure to themselves," a pair of wild pelicans from the wilds of Africa, a black-maned Cape lion, a beautiful zebra from Asia, a spotted and untameable hyena, a pair of Burthen camels, an oriental crested porcupine, an Angora goat, a Texas buffalo, a man monkey, talking parrots, and one enormous living serpent, the anaconda. Besides these attractions, there were an equestrian performer, a band of musicians and a splendid collection of paintings, which included the battles of Waterloo and New Orleans and the falls of Niagara. The first circus and menagerie appeared in Kalamazoo in 1839.⁵⁹

Most of the entertainments, however, were of the do-it-yourself type. Temperance meetings, lyceums and meetings of special

interest groups were common sources of recreation and social life.

The Kalamazoo Lyceum Association was organized in January 1836. Some of the topics debated in its meetings were: Is Slavery a greater evil than Intemperance? (The negative position lost); Does the female exert a greater influence than the male? (Negative position lost again); Ought Michigan assume State sovereignty without further action of Congress? (Outcome unknown); Would the annexation of Texas to the United States be beneficial to the Union? (Negative side lost). Abolitionism was also debated, but the results of the debate are not known.*⁶⁰

Temperance meetings were popular and common, for intemperance was a serious problem. The constitution of the Kalamazoo Total Abstinence Society was adopted in March 1836, and by January 1838, the total membership of the society was 138, sixty-nine of the total having been added since the last annual meeting. The sixty-nine new members consisted of thirty-nine males and thirty females. It is probable that the temperance societies met somewhat regularly, at least during the winter months. One of the notices in the Gazette, signed by the secretary, T. C. Sheldon, stated that an address might be expected. The January 1838 report of the Kalamazoo Total Abstinence Society estimated that ~~the~~ nine retail stores in Kalamazoo had sold around nine thousand gallons of alcoholic beverages during the past year.⁶¹

Temperance speakers traveled through the country, from village to village, and from city to city. Some of them were not as temperate as they professed to be. Ira Smith, one of the earliest

* Although there was an underground railroad station in the town, abolitionism was not popular in Kalamazoo. In the winter of 1838, a mass meeting of abolitionists ~~was~~ held in the Congregational Church was broken up by a mob of about forty men who used red pepper and dogs to break up the gathering, with the encouragement of a town official.⁶²

settlers in the area, told the story of an early temperance lecturer, who, when Smith appeared on the scene, was discussing intemperance with H. B. Huston in his store. After a while the Colonel said, "Well, let's go down and take something." "Well," said the tetotaller, "I'll do it; but this young man here. What about him?" Huston assured him that Smith was safe and the three men went down into the cellar and imbibed somewhat freely. Smith recalled years later that it took considerable effort and labor to sober the man up sufficiently to make him presentable for the evening meeting.⁶³

During the winter months there were meetings of groups having the same or similar interests. On February 25, 1837, the mechanics of Kalamazoo and vicinity were urged to meet at the Kalamazoo House on the 27th "to take into consideration the propriety of petitioning the legislature of this state, not to enact any laws regarding the management of the state penitentiary, which will conflict with the mechanics' interests of this state." A resolution approved at this gathering condemned placing funds of the State in prison factories in competition with the workingmen of the State. May 27 was set as the date for another meeting at the schoolhouse for the purpose of organizing a Mechanics' Society.⁶⁴

On the same day a group of farmers and other residents of the county met at the Kalamazoo House and a committee of five was appointed to draft a constitution for an agricultural society, which was later organized as the Kalamazoo Agriculture and Horticulture Society. H. H. Comstock was chairman of the board of trustees. In the summer of the same year, a group of men interested in improving the breed of horses and in horse racing organized the Kalamazoo Jockey Club. Justus Burdick was its first president and Charles E. Stuart, United States Senator from 1853 to

1859, ~~was~~ the secretary.

Those whose interests were more in the order of the artistic and cultural also had their organizations; for example, on April 25, 1838, all who were interested in forming a musical society were invited to attend a meeting at the schoolhouse.

Work, however, was the order of the day in pioneer Kalamazoo and there apparently were some who felt it indecent to take off even one day for celebrating. The editor of the Statesman in an editorial dated June 27, 1835, urged all to observe the Fourth of July, saying that "If the society in which we live, cannot bear up under the loss resulting from an occasional relaxation from the store or workshop, it must, indeed, be reduced to a most pitiable condition."

His admonition must have had its effect, for two weeks later he happily reported that the day was very properly celebrated at White Pigeon and that the celebration ended with a large number of regular and volunteer toasts being drunk. ⁶⁵

Life was robust in those days and the language that was ~~often~~ ^{often} used was violent and intemperate. In its March 24, 1838 issue, the Gazette printed a letter written by Thomas C. Sheldon, one of the proprietors of the village, in which he denounced certain individuals who had pretended to have acquired title to land which was part of the village of Kalamazoo. Sheldon describes these men as being "a gang of barefaced knaves and swindlers." In the next issue of the paper, he went on to say, "The persons alluded to as above, are Joseph Hutchins, Johnson Patrick,* and Elisha Belcher, all men of notorious character and reputation." The editor noted at the end of Sheldon's letter that Belcher was not involved in the affair. ⁶⁶

* - It is not known what the trouble was all about, but many years later the descendants of Patrick Johnson went to court to substantiate their claims to some of the public property in the city.

Apparently this unrestrained language was not taken too seriously, for the newspapers report but few brawls and libel suits. Yet these incidents probably afforded a few diversions to relieve the monotony of everyday existence.

By modern standards life and society in the 1830's would be classed as primitive, but it was also dynamic and vigorous. ~~As the next chapter~~

Chapter 2

EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES IN MICHIGAN AND KALAMAZOO, 1817-1839

I

Most of the early settlers of Kalamazoo were New Englanders and therefore firm believers in education; consequently, steps were taken early to establish a school for the children of the village. In 1832, five school districts were established; these were Bronson, Cooper, Alamo, Oshtemo and Richland. The following spring Commissioners for Common Schools were appointed; namely, Titus Bronson, Cyrus Lovell and Cyren Burdick. Of the five school districts, Bronson was designated District No. 1.

The first schoolhouse was built in the fall of 1833. It was a little slab building that stood on the south side of South Street, between Burdick and Henrietta Streets, on a plot of ground that had been set aside for a burial ground by Bronson and Richardson, but was never used. A year later a frame building was erected near the slab structure. This building served many ^{purposes} ~~purposes~~ for the village; it was used for church services, political meetings, entertainments, and as a court house.¹

There is some evidence that school was also held in other places than in the schoolhouse on South Street. There is a report that in 1836, school was conducted in the first home of Titus Bronson; later one or two other houses were used for school purposes, the last one being the front part of A. T. Prouty's house on

South Street, near what is now Bronson Park.

In the spring of 1837, on May 15, the voters of School District No. 1 voted to raise \$500 by taxation for the purpose of building a schoolhouse in the district and \$10 to provide a library for the use of the school. This schoolhouse was to be built on South Street on a piece of land given by Titus Bronson for that purpose. After the voters had authorized a new schoolhouse, the Board* proceeded with plans for a building worthy of the village. It was to be modeled after the United States Bank in Philadelphia, but when the pillars which were to support the roof were erected, the taxpayers became alarmed and a mass meeting was called. Judge E. Ransom reportedly was one of the leaders of the opposition and he was quoted as saying when he sat down, "Thank God, that I can do something for my country today."

At this meeting it was decided to sell the unfinished building and the fifty some volumes that had been collected for the library, at a cost of approximately \$50; the books were sold to the highest bidder, A. T. Prouty, for five cents each.²

For the rest of the decade, the school situation probably remained weak. No new school seems to have been built and the little school on South Street may have been the only school, although on February 17, 1838, a notice appeared in the Gazette soliciting proposals to be received by the subscribers for building a schoolhouse in District No. 1, village of Kalamazoo. Whether this school was ever built cannot be ascertained from the pages of the Gazette, and other early records are also inconclusive.³

Although the little school on South Street must have been

* The early records are unclear as to the identity of the Board. It may have been the Board of School Inspectors or some kind of township board.

incapable of accommodating all of the children in the village, it must be remembered that school attendance was not as obligatory as it is today and for years afterward many children attended school erratically.

Early in May 1837, the Board of School Inspectors of Kalamazoo held a meeting at the office of the township clerk for the purpose of organizing school districts and numbering them. School District No. 1 originally was ten miles long and five miles broad, but for years the boundaries of the ~~school~~ districts were reshuffled, new districts were created, so that the school situation was not conducive to the building up of a strong educational program.

In 1837 the Michigan Legislature had passed a primary school law which divided the State into ~~school~~ districts, each ~~of them~~ having enough inhabitants to support a teacher. As the districts increased in population, they were divided and new ones were created. This process was also followed in the villages, and each district was autonomous.⁴

II

An institution closely connected with the history of Kalamazoo is Kalamazoo College. Its founders were the Rev. Thomas Ward Merrill, the young Baptist preacher who visited Titus Bronson in the summer of 1830, and Judge Caleb Eldred of Comstock, who was president of the board of trustees of the college for twenty-five years. Merrill was very ambitious to found a college in this part of Michigan, but for several years his attempts were frustrated. The college was chartered as the Michigan and Huron Institute on April 22, 1833, but its location was still unsettled.⁵

Several villages wanted the college and Comstock was Bronson's

strongest competitor. H. H. Comstock, the founder of the village, offered to give eighty acres of land. In the fall of 1835, however, Bronson was chosen as the site of the new college, largely because of the efforts of Jeremiah Hall and the willingness of the people of Bronson to subscribe \$2,500 for land and buildings. In January 1837, the Gazette reported that the college now possessed funds in real estate and other properties to the amount of at least \$10,000. In the same issue of the paper the executive committee of the institution expressed its gratitude to those "who have manifested so deep an interest in raising up an Institution in this new country." The committee went on to say that all donations in money that had already been received were being used to purchase a farm and to erect a building in which to begin instruction, but ~~that~~ additional funds were urgently needed and that it was hoped ~~that~~ prompt payment would be made on the second installment of the subscriptions.

In its appeal the committee emphasized that one of the conditions for the location of the college at Kalamazoo was the pledge that the inhabitants of the village and its vicinity would furnish the means out of their subscriptions to pay for the farm on which it was to be located. Since the money had not come in as rapidly as necessary, Jeremiah Hall had, at great personal sacrifice, procured the funds to buy the farm. But he needed his money now and everyone who had made a pledge to the college was asked to pay promptly. ~~As an inducement to these who~~ A five per cent discount was offered to those who would pay up before January 28; those who didn't pay would be waited upon by the committee, which hoped that they would pay promptly.

The members of executive committee at this time were Caleb Eldred, Ezekiel Ransom, William Taylor, Jeremiah Hall, and T. W. Merrill.

Although the name of the institution was not changed to Kalamazoo College until 1855, it is interesting to note that the title of the article referred to above is "Kalamazoo College." On March 21, 1837, the name of the college was changed from Michigan and Huron Institute to Kalamazoo Literary Institute.⁶

Instruction was begun at the Institute on July 31 of the same year; tuition was four dollars per term in the English branches and five dollars for instruction in languages. In the fall, Nathaniel A. Balch*, a ^{lawyer}~~lawyer~~ who had recently come to Kalamazoo, became head of the school and was largely responsible for getting the infant school organized and on its way.

By the spring of 1838, it seemed as if the Institute was well on its way, but on May 1 it was confronted by the Kalamazoo Branch of the University of Michigan. The purpose of the branches of the university was to fit students for Ann Arbor, or for a full course at the local branch or at some other college.

Having already one college, why were the people of Kalamazoo interested in acquiring another one? Local rivalry was probably a factor; the villages of southwestern Michigan were competing for the honor of having a branch. And there apparently were people in Kalamazoo who objected to the Literary Institute because it was a Baptist controlled school. Although the Branch later became popular in Kalamazoo, the majority of the people at first regarded it as an opposition school and the attendance at the Institute was larger than at the Branch. The latter had only one teacher, the former, two.⁷

* Balch did not stay with the college long. He later became a prominent citizen of Kalamazoo, holding at one time or other the offices of member of the Board of Trustees of the village, president of the village corporation, member of the State Senate and postmaster.

The Branch, as it was popularly known, was a two-story frame structure that stood among the burr oaks on the northeast corner of what is now Bronson Park. The first principal of the Branch was paid a salary of \$1,200 a year, a salary that was surprisingly high and one that would not be paid to any other school head for twenty-five years.

By the spring of 1839, the panic that had begun two years earlier was making its effects felt in Kalamazoo and both the Institute and the Branch experienced difficulty in finding the necessary funds. The Branch suspended operations on August 6, 1839, and the practical solution to the financial difficulties that both institutions were having seemed to be a merger of the two schools. The Baptists were told that if they would suspend their school, they could have the privilege of nominating the teachers for the merged school. This then apparently was what was done: The trustees of the Literary Institute nominated the teachers and the regents of the University appointed them; the regents also promised financial assistance. The merger of the two schools was effected in 1840. In the merged school the Branch was used for classes and the Institute building for a dormitory.⁸

III

Michigan has been concerned with libraries from its earliest history. Probably the first mention of a library occurs in the promotion of the Catholepistemiad or University of Michigania at Detroit, enacted by the governor and judges of the Territory in 1817. The City Library of Detroit was begun the same year and the State Library of Michigan was established in 1828. Three years later Lewis Cass and others organized the Detroit Athenaeum to conduct a library and a reading room, and in the same year the Legislative

Council provided for social libraries, the first mention of library organization in the territorial laws.

Michigan was the first state in the Union to provide for libraries as part of the educational system of the State in its constitution. Article X, section 4 of the Constitution of 1835 provides that

As soon as the circumstances of the state will permit, the legislature shall provide for the establishment of libraries; one at least in each township; and the money which shall be paid by persons as an equivalent for exemption from military duty, and the clear proceeds of all fines assessed in the several counties for any breach of the penal laws, shall be exclusively applied to the support of said libraries.

In 1837 the State Legislature passed "An Act to Provide for the Organization and Support of Primary Schools." This law permitted the qualified voters of each district to impose a tax sufficient for the purchase of a suitable library case and also a sum of money, not^{to} exceed ten dollars annually, for the purchase of books, to be selected by the voters or by the school board. The voters were also authorized to designate the place where the library was to be kept and the person who was to have charge of it. The superintendent of public instruction was directed to establish the necessary rules for its regulation.

The law empowered the board of school inspectors in each township to create new school districts. After one had been proposed, the inspectors were required to deliver a notice in writing, describing its boundaries, and the time and place of the first meeting to a taxable resident of the new district. The duty of this person was to notify every qualified voter in the district. Then the law went on to say, "Whenever

such inhabitant shall neglect or refuse to serve the notice as required, he shall forfeit to the district, for the use of its library, the sum of twenty-five dollars.¹¹ This law also stipulated that the officers of each district were to be a moderator, director and assessor and that if a person elected to one of these offices should refuse to serve without sufficient cause, he would be required to forfeit ten dollars ~~to the district~~ for the use of ~~the~~ library.⁹

In spite of the commendable efforts of the State Legislature to encourage the establishment of ~~school~~ district libraries, the permissive system for creating and supporting school libraries proved a failure.

If discord and dissension had not stopped the building of a school and the establishing of a school library, Kalamazoo might have had the honor of having the first library in southwestern Michigan. As it is, the honor belongs to the little town of Three Rivers. On October 15, 1837, the school board of the village voted "one hundred dollars to build a school house, five dollars with which to buy a library, which must be provided with a suitable case and John H. Bowman to act a librarian." Bowman was the man who had platted the village and was also the first state senator from that district.¹⁰

The school library of Three Rivers was one of the earliest in the state, only Saginaw City, which was founded in 1820, having an earlier one--1836. A year later a Mechanics Library Association was organized there and its library was opened to the public twenty years later.¹¹

Although there seem to be no records of school libraries being established in Kalamazoo County during this period, there apparently were some, for the Kalamazoo Bookstore, operated by Henry Gilbert,

the publisher of the Kalamazoo Gazette, advertised books suitable for school libraries.¹²

There may have been no libraries in Kalamazoo, but there undoubtedly were books, for it is likely that the more affluent settlers brought their books with them. A number of the addresses and speeches that have survived from that day and some of the articles that were printed in the Gazette indicate that the speakers and writers were well read. Titus Bronson himself was man who read much and forgot little of what he had read.

But there were some in the little village who regretted that it had no library. In the March 19, 1836 issue of the Statesman, the editor complained that

It is highly desirable to this populous and prosperous village, that there has not been established in it before now, a well selected library. We hope that an object so truly desirable may be accomplished without further delay. The expense would be but lightly felt, if the effort should meet with general concurrence of our citizens, who are abundantly able to contribute to such a praiseworthy undertaking. We hope the citizens of this village will take this into serious consideration, and think it best to call a meeting on the subject immediately.¹³

The first sentence of this statement as printed did not make sense; a week later the error was corrected by substituting discreditable for desirable, making it read, "It is highly discreditable to this populous and prosperous village,..."

But as far as can be ascertained today, nothing came of the editor's appeal.

The editor of the Statesman, however, was not the only one in Kalamazoo who was hoping for a library. In February 1837, the mechanics of the carpenters and joiners' order were invited to meet in the schoolhouse for the purpose of forming a society and to take measures for establishing a library. But this plan too failed to materialize.¹⁴

Still the people of Kalamazoo, who were interested in reading, had a number of opportunities for acquiring books and periodicals. In 1834 the Statesman acted as agent for Waldie's Select Circulating Library of Philadelphia. This library reprinted the "choicest production of the British press" in periodical form. It was this practice of pirating the works of English authors that so infuriated men like Charles Dickens. The price of this periodical was five dollars a year.¹⁵

Then there was the Kalamazoo Bookstore, which provided a good stock of books. Among the books listed for sale in the summer of 1837 were the following titles: Boys and Girls Library, Carpenter's Guide, Flowers of the Forest, Handel and Hayden's Music, Milner's Church History, Mother's Hymn Book, Scott's Napoleon, Parents' Assistant, Smollet's Works, Todd's Students Manual, Two Strange Girls, Waverly Novels, and Young Infidel. Besides books, the bookstore also sold garden and flower seeds.

As the decade of the 1830's closed, we find that the people of Kalamazoo could find reading material if they wanted it and were able to afford the price, but public libraries accessible to all who lived in the community were still years in the future.

Chapter 3

YEARS OF GROWTH AND CHANGE: 1840-1860

I

The opening of the fifth decade of the nineteenth century was a stirring one. The Presidential campaign of 1840 was one of the most exciting in American history. The Whigs had been out of office for twelve years; now they were job hungry and determined to win the Presidency at all costs. In order to defeat Van Buren, Andrew Jackson's successor, the Whigs had to have a rough and ready candidate like Old Hickory and William Henry Harrison, the hero of the Indian battle of Tippecanoe in 1811, was their man.

Harrison, so Whig propaganda would have it, did not wear velvet and corsets like Van Buren; he lived in a log house and drank hard cider instead of the exotic liquors that Van Buren favored. The editor of the Kalamazoo Gazette caustically observed that many people lived in log houses, which Harrison did not, and drank hard cider, but that did not make them eligible for the office of the Presidency. But his sarcasm fell on the deaf ears of the Whigs of Kalamazoo. They too, like the Whigs all over the country, must have a log cabin and a pole, which was erected on the northwest corner of Main and North Rose Streets. And there was wild cheering for Tippecanoe and Tyler too, accompanied by copious drafts of hard cider.¹

The Whig strategy paid off and Harrison was elected President, but alas for Whig hopes. A month after his inauguration, Harrison died and was succeeded by John Tyler, who definitely was more of a Southerner than a Whig and the hopes of Whig stalwarts like Daniel Webster went glimmering.

Although Kalamazoo took its politics seriously, this blow to Whig hopes and prospects did not retard the village's growth and development. Whigs and Democrats alike believed that the little village had a great future. The editor of the Gazette, a staunch Democrat, trumpeted its advantages and prospects, sometimes even in verse:

Come all ye good people who are bound for the west,
In search of a country where you may like best;
Come follow me and settle in this village where it's new,
Here in this pleasant village called Kalamazoo.²

It probably was fortunate for Kalamazoo that most of its settlers were not connoisseurs of good verse.

In retrospect it becomes clear that the little village on the Kalamazoo River had a great future. During the decades of the 1840's and 1850's, it grew from a little rural hamlet, with a population of approximately 1,500, to a city, though it wasn't chartered as a such until years later, of nearly 9,000. At the same time its industrialization went on apace, important men of the nation visited ~~it~~ ^{the village} and lectured to its people, and a number of its prominent citizens achieved national renown. This growth in population and industrialization, however, brought with it problems that perplexed and frustrated both citizens and officials, ~~of the village~~.

II

What was the Kalamazoo of the 1840's like? Those who know the modern city will find it extremely difficult to visualize the little village of pioneer days. Most of the landmarks that the pioneers

knew have vanished; the burr oaks, which were once so plentiful that Kalamazoo was called the Burr Oak Village, are, with a few exceptions, gone. Only the names of the streets and avenues of downtown Kalamazoo would sound familiar to the ~~city's~~ pioneers.

Early day visitors, who recorded their impressions, agreed that Kalamazoo was a lovely village. It was beautified by many natural trees. Many pioneer villages seemed eager to get rid of their trees, but for half a century or more, Kalamazoo was noted for its trees. A later generation gave Gen. Justus Burdick credit for saving the burr oaks and other trees, which at that time were still standing in the streets and on the public ground.³

^{ow} Toward the end of the decade of the '40's, we find that home owners were beginning to take greater pride in the appearance of their houses and yards. Ornamental trees and shrubbery were being planted extensively, fences repaired and repainted, sidewalks raised and graveled.⁴

Streets and sidewalks, however, remained in great need of improvement. In the winter of 1848, the Gazette complained,

We are in the midst of an Irish winter--snow, rain, hail and 'free dirt.' Our streets navigable for mud scows and any dimensions, & all the roads leading to us rivers of liquid clay. It is nearly impossible for even an empty wagon to reach the village from the country.⁵

Because of the nearly impassable roads, villagers were deprived of wheat, wood and other essential supplies.

During the early years of this decade, much of the business of the village was still concentrated around Main and Portage, though there were a few business houses between Burdick and Rose Streets. There seem to have been at least three of these--the law office of Stuart and Miller on the northeast corner of Main and Burdick, Frank Dennison's store, which was described as a large one, and Huston's

old store on the northeast corner of Main and Rose, all of them on the north side of Main. Across from them, on the south side of the street, stood the "mansion" of Justus Burdick, its "demesne" including most of the land between Rose and Burdick and reaching nearly to South Street.

But most of the stores seem to have been between Portage and Edwards. Here were located the "Old Brig," Edwards provision store, the country store of the Sheldon Brothers, William Booher's saloon and country store, the bookstore of Walker and Company; and on the corner of Main and Edwards, Oliver Davenport had two stores and D. A. and Clem McNair had their drug store. On the north side of Main were the U.S. Land Office, the Kalamazoo House, and somewhere near it a little tin shop and a harness shop, and in a little building, 16 by 20 feet, just east of the hotel, a sartorial and picture office. The Michigan Branch bank stood on the south side of Main, somewhere west of Portage and the Kalamazoo Bookstore, three doors west of the bank.⁶

There were also a few manufacturing shops, like that of Cooley and Smith's Chair and Bedstead Factory, where most of the labor was performed by machinery that was worked by water power, and all kinds of produce were received in payment for furniture. This little factory stood about forty rods west of the Court House. The largest factory seems to have been the Kalamazoo Carriage and Waggon Factory on the corner of North Burdick and Water Streets.⁷

Almost all of the businesses of Kalamazoo in the 1840's were small enterprises. It is difficult to keep track of them, for they were always moving from one "old stand" to another. Many of these firms were partnerships, which were dissolved with great frequency.

No reason is given for these dissolutions, but the Gazette and later the Kalamazoo Telegraph contain many of these notices. Names and owners also changed with disconcerting frequency and for a small village the number of businesses seems large.

Although many of the stores were still general stores, specialization was becoming common. The stores of Arnold and Cobb, Goss and Darling, and Clark and Kendall were dry goods stores. Among the other special stores were a shoe store, jewelry store, a hardware and stove store, a couple of drug stores, two bookstores, and several saloons. In 1843 there were also nine law offices, three of them located one door west of the Kalamazoo House.⁸

By the middle of the decade, brick buildings began to appear. Probably the first brick house was that of L. H. Trask, which stood on the southeast corner of North Park and Main, opposite St. Luke's. Thomas Pierce Sheldon also had his home in this area, ~~it having been~~ one of the first houses in the West Main district. The first brick store was built in 1845 and stood on the north side of Main, near or on the corner of Main and Burdick. During that year forty to fifty buildings were constructed, most of them residences, and twelve of them brick.⁹

The building boom in Kalamazoo continued for more than a decade, although fires provided serious setbacks. Early in the morning of February 4, 1850, a disastrous fire broke out in Hooker's Leather Store, which was located two buildings west of Burdick, on the north side of Main. Before the fire was controlled, three

stores and five other buildings were destroyed--every building from Austin and Tomlinson's brick store on the corner of Main and North Burdick to Sheldon's bookstore, which was saved with great difficulty. The Telegraph office was also destroyed. The loss of property was estimated to be between \$7,000 and \$10,000, the greatest loss from fire to date.¹⁰

Six months after the fire, Frank Denison began work on the proposed Cosmopolitan Hotel in the burnt district. This building, as planned, was to be 90 x 70 feet and four stories high, and was part of Denison's Brick Block. The hotel had from eighty to a hundred rooms and was opened to the public in April 1854. In the fall of the following year, the name of the hotel was changed to the Burdick House.*¹¹

Gen. Justus Burdick, whose homestead included most of the land between Rose and Burdick on the south of Main, died July 6, 1849. Burdick was born in Canaan, New Hampshire, in 1793, and had come to Bronson in 1835. Soon after his arrival he became one of the proprietors of the village, Bronson selling his interest in the village, with the exception of four lots, to Burdick for \$850. According to the obituary that appeared in the Gazette General Burdick was noted for his charities and benefactions, among these being the Episcopal Church, which owed its erection in a great degree to his generosity. His wife died in her sleep on September 4, 1849.¹²

* In February 1972 plans for a \$11.5 million development, which would utilize all of the block bordered by the Kalamazoo Mall, Michigan Avenue, Rose and Water Streets--the so-called Burdick Block, were revealed. This complex, which has been named the Kalamazoo Center, would include a Civic Center, a 200-room hotel, an enclosed retail center, commercial office space and underground parking. Although this area comprises some of the oldest buildings in the city, only about half of it is currently occupied and all of the Burdick Hotel building itself is closed up. The proposed development, due to its integrated structure and multiple uses, may be unique in the United States.

The deaths of Burdick and his wife made their property available for business structures. The first building on the Burdick property was McNair's Brick Block on the corner of Main and South Burdick, where the Kalamazoo building now stands. In the fall of 1853, the Gazette noted that the store of H. Gilbert, which occupied part of this building, was the finest business establishment in town. The following year another block of stores was built and in 1855 the Burdick "mansion" was moved to South Rose, where it stood for many years; then it was moved to the southeast corner of Vine and South Westnedge Streets, where it still stands. By 1864 the entire Burdick property was occupied by business shops and stores.* 13

In 1855 the Humphrey Block was being erected on the corner of Main and Portage--"an asset to the village, looming up grandly and proudly on its conspicuous site." This building has been a landmark in Kalamazoo for over a hundred years. During the Civil War and perhaps for some time after, it housed the Armory; in the 1880's and for many years thereafter Sam Folz had his big store in it; until recently it was occupied by Michigan Office Equipment; and in 1972, by the Ambassador Travel Service. This spot, as has already been mentioned, was also the site of "Old Brig 97", Col. H. B. Huston's second store. 14

In spite of all the construction that was going on, the demand for houses continued to overwhelm Kalamazoo. The Gazette noted in 1855 that every shanty, dark rooms over stores and in basements were occupied until something better turned up. Three years later it reported that, in spite of hard times, seventy-three

* Until recent years most of these buildings were still standing. In the mid 1960's two or three of them were destroyed by fire and in 1970 or 1971 the remaining ones were razed. Today the area between the Kalamazoo Building and the corner of West Michigan (Main Street) is again a broad expanse--a parking lot.

buildings and four stores were in construction and that \$157,000 was being spent on these buildings.¹⁵

III

Kalamazoo did not have a village government until 1843. Whatever government there was seems to have been that of the township. In 1838 the Michigan Legislature passed an act that set the bounds of the village and provided for an annual election of seven trustees, four of them to constitute a board. The law provided that "The president and trustees of said village shall be a body corporate and politic, under the name of the President and Trustees of the village of Kalamazoo." This act, however, did not result in a village election; a further act of February 8, 1839 also failed to provide for the calling of an election, nor did an amendatory act. It was not until 1843 that Kalamazoo actually got a village government.¹⁶

Col. Hosea B. Huston was appointed first president of the village corporation. The newly-constituted government did not lose any time in dealing with some of the nuisances that were plaguing the village. The first and third ordinances adopted declared it to be unlawful for swine, cattle or horses to run at large within the corporation. Owners of swine were to be fined 75¢ per head, and, if the fine was not paid, the animals were to be sold at public auction. The fifth ordinance made it illegal for any fowl, geese, or turkeys to run at large from April to August. These ordinances, laudable as they were, did not enforce themselves and many years were to pass before the people of Kalamazoo were safe from the destructive ravages of uncontrolled livestock.

But the village trustees continued to pass ordinances. One

that was adopted in the fall of 1850 called attention to the fact that it was unlawful for any cows, oxen, heifers or other "neat" cattle to be at large in any street, alley, lane, park or other public place within the corporate limits of the village between 9 p.m. and 4 a.m. Six years later, however, owners of hogs were urged to gather them in, for the marshall was trying to rid the streets of these animals. And the next spring, the Gazette reported that horses and cattle were still being left to run at large at night and were causing great damage. But there was a note of hope in the report: the marshall was threatening to impound the animals.

These early ordinances also sought to improve the appearance of the village. The second ordinance passed in 1843 declared it unlawful to pile wood, shingles or lumber on the streets and sidewalks, and the fourth one made it illegal for any person, except the owner, to cut, mangle, disfigure or write upon any building, or to cut, mangle, or break any picket fence, or other fences, or trees which had been reserved for shade trees on sidewalks or public grounds or premises of any person or to tie any horse or horses or cattle to any picket fence or shade trees within the limits of the village. The fine for these offences was not to exceed fifty dollars. These ordinances seem to indicate that there was not as much order and neatness or respect for the property of others in the village as some considered desirable.¹⁷

IV

In the early 1850's, the village of Kalamazoo embraced an area of about one square mile and its population was a little over 3,000. The assessed valuation of the property in the village was close to \$1,000,000. Although it is true that Kalamazoo was just a small town in area, it began to expand rapidly after 1850.

Shortly after arriving in Kalamazoo from Holland on October 1, 1850, Paulus den Bleyker bought the farm of H. G. Wells near Schoolcraft, but this farm was too far from Kalamazoo to suit him. Then he heard that the farm of Ex-Governor Epaphroditus Ransom was for sale for \$12,000, a price that the people of the village thought was entirely unreasonable. Den Bleyker, however, did not hesitate and for \$12,000 bought not only 220 acres of land, 180 of which adjoined the village, but also the livestock, chickens, tools, farm machinery, and household furniture. Den Bleyker described the "estate of the Governor" as "a perfect villa--a castle of a house."

The Ransom farm was bounded by Lovell Street on the north, the swamps along Portage Creek on the east and south and a line between Rose and Park Streets on the west.

Early in 1853 den Bleyker wrote that people were continually asking him for "houselots" which he was selling for \$1,000 to \$1,600 an acre. Because of the rapid expansion of the village, den Bleyker moved the Ransom house, which originally stood on South Burdick, to a site on the present-day Den Bleyker Court and South Burdick Street. The house was torn down in 1961. By 1858 the entire Ransom property was in the village and for many years thereafter was known as the Den Bleyker Addition.¹⁸

V

Another mark of progress, at least it was considered to be such in 1840, was the removal of the last of the Indians from the area. The Indians were assembled on the grounds north of where the New York Central depot has been standing for many years. Although the removal of the Indians was conducted as kindly as possible, few of the inhabitants of southeastern Michigan regretted the treatment given to the Indian. The typical American of the

1830's and '40's and for several decades afterwards had little use for the Indian and wanted him out of the way as quickly and finally as possible.

It is said that as the Indians left their ancestral homes and were walking down Main Street, along the old Territorial Road, they came by the home of Judge Ransom. As they passed the house, they all took off their head gear and held up their right hands in respect for the judge who had been a real friend to them.¹⁹

VI

As had been true during the 1830's, markets in 1840 were still a problem. The fields in southwestern Michigan were productive, but cash markets were nearly non-existent and barter was still the better way of disposing of one's produce. This was especially true of the interior part of the region. If this area was to prosper, a more certain and efficient method of reaching its potential markets would have to be developed.

In 1842-43, D. S. Walbridge and Company put a line of scows or flat boats on the Kalamazoo River which carried flour and other produce to Lake Michigan, from where they were taken to Buffalo, New York, in sailing craft or "perpellers." (Walbridge may have had a number of pole boats, which carried wheat to Saugatuck, on the river as early as 1841.) Wheat now had an appreciable monetary value and white wheat sold for 44¢ a bushel. These scows or flat boats were the main spoke in the economic wheel of Kalamazoo until the coming of the railroad.²⁰

The importance of the railroad in the life and economy of Kalamazoo can hardly be over exaggerated. For nearly a decade the village had been awaiting its arrival. The first appearance of the train was an occasion of great excitement. The Telegraph of January 30, 1846, carried this news item: "Last Sunday as people were

returning from the afternoon service, they were somewhat surprised at the appearance of a Loco-Motive, belching forth volumes of smoke as it came to the Depot." The first regular trains began to run on Monday, February 2. Passenger trains left Kalamazoo for Detroit daily, except Sunday, at 6:30 in the morning and the fare was \$4.37. These early trains ran on wooden rails shod with iron straps.

The depot for the Michigan Central Railroad, which was owned by the State of Michigan, was completed in November 1845. Colonel Berrien pronounced it to be the best in the State.

On February 11, 1846, a great celebration was held at the Kalamazoo House to honor the completion of the Michigan Central Railroad to Kalamazoo. Col. ^{Abraham} Edwards was president of the committee on arrangements. According to the paper, the spacious house was splendidly lighted and decorated with green boughs.

The one hundred and fifty guests dined on roasted, baked and boiled fish, flesh and fowl and the dessert consisted of various fine fruits, washed down with old Port or good Adam's ale. After the dinner there was a program of band music, poems, speeches, songs, letters from those who could not attend, sentiments and toasts till "the short hours began to strike."²¹

VII

The iron and steel industry was the most important one in Kalamazoo during the 1850's.

In September 1837, the Gazette printed the following news item:

In draining a piece of ground about a mile from this village, during the past week, a bed of iron has been discovered, of the kind called bog ore. Informant states that immense quantities may be found on the plain.

The editor went on to say that the sample indicated that the

ore would yield a large portion of iron, and he voiced the hope that the day was not far distant when the ore would be processed and the smelting business begun on an extensive scale in Kalamazoo. But another decade would lapse before any attempt was made to exploit this resource.²²

Sometime in the spring of 1847, Ezra Wilder of New York began to buy up land owned by George Torrey and Silas Trobridge, for which he paid \$5,000. In June he began the construction of a blast furnace that was completed by the end of the year, and upon its completion, it was hoped that the Wilder Company would be able to produce 120 tons of pure pig iron a year. When the blast furnace went into operation, it produced between two and three tons of good quality iron a day.²³

Although Wilder had begun the successful processing of bog ore, he was unable to make the operation a profitable one. In November 1849 he was forced to sell his property to Allen Potter and Jeremiah Woodbury for \$2,500, which was much less than his investment. Consequently, the large-scale and profitable exploitation of the bog ore resources had to wait until the early 1850's.

By 1850 three other firms, besides Potter & Woodbury, had entered the iron industry. The largest company in the industry was that of William M. Burtt, which began the erection of a large foundry and machine shop in the spring of 1853. This foundry produced nine hundred tons of pure pig iron, much of which was used to manufacture the 4,500 stoves made by the company. The Burtt Company employed 105 men and built steam engines of practically any desirable power, besides mill work, screw and bolt cutting, iron planing and turning and every kind of machinery used in flour and saw mills.²⁴

The bog iron industry was big business in Kalamazoo. In 1853,

15,000 tons of ore were raised, which yielded seven hundred tons of pure pig iron. The pig iron sold for \$40 a ton. By the end of 1855, the bog iron industry consisted of one blast furnace, three machine shops, four foundries and two agricultural implement factories. One of these stood on North Rose Street, a few rods north of Main Street.²⁵

Although the bog iron industry did wonders for the economy of Kalamazoo, the editor of the Gazette hoped for still greater things. In an editorial written in March 1850, he noted that Kalamazoo had unrivalled facilities for the manufacture of paper and he invited capitalists to an investigation of the matter. Three years later he complained that the town still did not have a paper mill, but he expressed the hope that some capitalist would soon do something about this lack.²⁶

For many years Kalamazoo has^s been known for the diversification of its industries and business enterprises. This diversification began in the 1850's. J. G. Garland completed the first piano to be made in Kalamazoo in 1853, and sometime during this decade, probably in the spring of 1856, George Taylor planted the first celery seeds, the beginning of an enterprise that was to give the town the name of Celeryville. Among the industries and businesses listed in 1854 were a plough factory, five harness and saddle shops, four wagon and carriage shops, one marble factory, two distillers, one hat manufactory, four flour mills, and three saw mills.²⁷

Business in Kalamazoo seems to have been an exclusively masculine enterprise until 1855, when Clark and Babcock introduced female clerks into their "extensive mercantile establishment."²⁸

Another innovation concerned the hours that stores and shops were open. In October 1856, most of the merchants and tradesmen

agreed that from November 1 until March 1, stores and shops would close at eight in the evening, except Saturdays. Three years later they decided to close their doors at eight in the evening, apparently throughout the year. The Gazette approved this step, observing that long hours were unprofitable to owners and deprived employees of the opportunity for mental and moral culture.²⁹

Until the middle of the nineteenth century, the laboring man seems to have accepted meekly whatever his employer saw fit to give him. This evidently was also true in Kalamazoo, but in August 1850, the mechanics of the village called a meeting for October 1, for the purpose of forming a society for their protection. Three years later they met again and the announced purpose of this meeting was to raise the price of labor to a standard corresponding with the "present high prices of food, fuel, real estate, and interest." The working men asked for a wage increase of thirteen per cent and threatened that if this increase was not granted, they would pledge themselves to stop working, "commonly called striking." Wages seem to have been the only grievance; nothing was said about improved working conditions or shorter working hours.³⁰

~~VIII~~

During the 1840's and 1850's most of the people of Kalamazoo were preoccupied with the problem of making a living, or of making money, few of them seeing the need for civic and cultural improvements and innovations. Therefore it was fortunate for the little village that Alexander J. Sheldon arrived there in 1843. It is safe to say that during the ten years that he lived in Kalamazoo, his influence and activities in the direction of civic growth and development far exceeded that of any other person. Although Sheldon was a Whig, his influence and constructive programs were such that even

Agriculture, however, was the important business of the country surrounding Kalamazoo. Wheat probably was the chief crop, but diversified farming was adopted early by the farmers of the area. As early as the spring of 1848, Amariah T. Prouty advertised that he had for sale over ten thousand "engrafted" apple trees, besides peach, pear, cherry, apricot and other trees. Obviously there must have been a market for these trees.* Prouty may have established the first nursery in Kalamazoo. It was located in a large field east of Elm Street and extended north from the Michigan Railroad tracks to north of Willard Street.³¹

The Kalamazoo County Agricultural Society was organized in the fall of 1846, and held its first fair on October 7 and 8. The chief attractions of the fair seem to have been a cattle show and plowing match, and perhaps the dinner, which was available at the Kalamazoo House for twenty-five cents.³²

To the farmer everything that pertained to his business was important and the topic of ^{conversation} and discussion. The invention, then, of Hiram Moore, a Climax farmer, must have been the subject of much talk and argument.

Sometime before 1840, Moore conceived the idea of constructing a machine that would cut and thresh grain in one operation. He ~~then~~ went to Rochester, New York, to have the castings made and then built his first combine harvester. In 1839 he appeared on Prairie Ronde with a machine that cut and threshed the wheat, delivering it uncleaned in large boxes. The machine, however, was

* Enoch Harris, a Negro, and his wife Deborah, were among the first, if not the first, settlers in Oshtemo Township, arriving there in 1829 or 1830. Harris, who was held in high regard by other frontiersmen, moved from Ohio to Michigan and brought apple seeds with him. He is credited with planting the first apple orchard in Kalamazoo County. The orchard was located between Winchell Avenue and Stadium drive, on a street still known as Apple Lane.³³

in need of improvement, but in a few years Moore had so perfected his invention that it cut, threshed, cleaned and delivered the wheat in bags. The machine cut a swath of fourteen feet, was drawn by sixteen horses and required six men to operate.

For a number of years Moore's combine was used quite extensively on the farms of Prairie Ronde and Climax, but the invention and perfection of the McCormick reaper resulted in its disuse in Michigan. The reaper enabled the farmer to cut his own grain, without having to depend on so many men and horses, and he was also able to save the straw, which was an important item in his economy.

Although it may have lost its popularity in Kalamazoo County, the combine was not a failure. Around the year 1850, one of Moore's machines was shipped ^{by way of} ~~around~~ the Horn and taken to California. There it found ideal conditions and was used on the great grain fields of the State for many years.³⁴

VIII

During the '40's and '50's most of the people of Kalamazoo were preoccupied with the problems of making a living, or of making money, few of them seeing the need for civic and cultural improvements and innovations. The arrival, therefore, of Alexander J. Sheldon in 1843 was an auspicious event for the little village. It is safe to say that during the ten years he lived in Kalamazoo, his influence and activities in the direction of civic growth and development far exceeded that of any other person. Although Sheldon was a Whig, his achievements were such that even the ardent Democratic editor of the Gazette, Volney Hascall, had only praise for him.

Sheldon is credited with opening the first bookstore in Kalamazoo, which is not correct; for he bought the bookstore of S. K.

Selkrig, which was located four doors west of the Kalamazoo House. Before Selkrig's there had been two or three other bookstores, but it is likely that Sheldon's was the first to be really worthy of the name.³⁵

As has already been mentioned above, the streets of the village were almost impassable during the winter and spring months. Then in March 1849, Sheldon had a plank walk laid in front of St. Luke's at his own expense. This seems to have convinced the villagers-- that plank walks were practical. On May 24 Sheldon, who had been appointed marshall and street commissioner of the village, set the grade stakes for a plank walk on Burdick Street and during the fall and summer many plank walks were constructed under his supervision. In May and June the owners of the land on the east and west sides of Burdick were ordered to grade the streets and make plank walks within sixty days, according to the specifications in the marshall's office and under his supervision. If these walks, which averaged five feet in width, were not completed within sixty days, the marshall was authorized to finish the work at the owners' expense.³⁶

The construction of plank walks continued at such a pace that the editor of the Gazette was able to report in the spring of 1850 that good, substantial walks were being laid "in every area of importance, so that our village from center to circumference is accessible to foot passengers during every kind of weather." About a year later he commented further: "Thanks to our enterprising village marshall, we are not compelled to ford streets and the mud knee-deep during the present thaw. The plank walks carry us 'high and dry' through all difficulties."³⁷

Sheldon's interest in the progress and good appearance of the

village went far beyond plank walks; in May 1849 he reminded the villagers that the cholera season was fast approaching and urged them to keep their premises clean. The following spring he had the following notice printed in the Gazette: "Good people of this village, are hereby notified to remove all their wood, lumber, or other nuisances from the streets and alleys on the line of their respective lots and without delay..." And he probably initiated the ordinances that placed restrictions on those engaged in the business of tanning, or of building privies, hogsties, cowpens and stables.³⁸

His efforts to improve the appearance of the village were evidently appreciated and especially by the editor of the Gazette. As early as June 1849, he had printed a glowing appreciation of the work of Sheldon:

Our village will now surpass any other in the state for beauty and cleanliness. The citizens are under deep obligations to their village Marshall for the thorough and impartial manner in which he has discharged his trust. By the side of Marshalls Ney, Murat and other of Napoleon's favorites should be placed the name of Marshall Sheldon; for his charges on dry goods boxes, wood piles and all other nuisances, which have so long infested our streets, have no other parallel than that furnished by the resistless sweep of the aforesaid French Generals on their flying and dismayed opponents...³⁹

The Park was another one of Sheldon's projects. In April 1850, the Gazette printed a notice under the title "Hurrah for Our Side." This notice informed its readers that the marshall of the village would be happy to meet the citizens at the Indian Mound on "Saturday the 20th inst. or Wednesday the 24th," for the purpose of planting trees in the Park. All who had any pride "in improving our beautiful village are requested to be on hand with spades, or such trees as they may desire to donate for this purpose. A thousand trees are not too many for this purpose, so do not be afraid of bringing too many."

A year later Sheldon reported that during the past year the Park had been properly enclosed, the principal walks graded and graveled and the avenues lined with every variety of forest tree indigenous to this region. A triple row of maples and elms surrounded the entire enclosure of six acres. Kalamazoo, according to this report, had the handsomest and only park in the State. Unfortunately for the beauty of the Park, people had broken down or mutilated some of the trees and had often carried off the gates. In 1856 the beauty of the Park was further enhanced by the planting of three hundred shade trees.*⁴⁰

IX

One of Kalamazoo's great needs at this time was an adequate hall for public meetings and entertainments and for the storing of fire-fighting equipment. In its early days, while the population was still small, the Kalamazoo House had been a favorite meeting place. The schoolhouses and the Court House were also used for small meetings, but by 1850 these facilities were inadequate.

Early in 1852, under the leadership of A. J. Sheldon, steps were taken to construct a public hall. The subscribers to the stock of the building, which was to be named Firemen's-Hall, met at the Court House on February 16. Among the seven directors chosen to superintend the erection of the hall were A. J. Sheldon, Israel Kellogg, proprietor of the Kalamazoo House, and J. P. Clapham, one of Kalamazoo's first druggists.⁴²

The hall was built of brick, in Tudor Gothic style, and its dimensions were 40 x 80 feet. The upper story was finished as a

* The village's title to the Park was not clear and in 1856 the heirs of S. H. Richardson, the brother-in-law of Titus Bronson, made claims on the Park. H. G. Wells, however, was able to settle the matter on behalf of the county and obtained a release of the property.⁴³

place for public meetings, lectures and concerts, and the lower story was divided "into spacious and elegant offices for renting."

There was also a room for storing fire apparatus. The total cost of the building was around \$3,000, and it was completed in March 1853. To celebrate its completion, a festival was held on April 13, consisting of a program in the afternoon and a ball in the evening. The proceeds from the tickets, which cost \$2.50 a piece, were used to pay the mechanics who had worked for credit.

Firemen's Hall, which stood on the west side of South Burdick, just south of Exchange Place, was for many years a center of Kalamazoo's political and social life. The hall's most serious defect was that it was impossible to ventilate it properly, for the lower sash rose as the upper one descended. Horace Greeley, who gave a couple of lectures there, suggested that it would be better to fire a cannon ball through the roof than to cause death by slow suffocation. Firemen's Hall was torn down in January 1942.⁴⁴

As Kalamazoo grew, its buildings were built closer together and fires began to be a serious danger. Until the spring of 1846, whatever fire fighting that was done was strictly volunteer, unorganized and usually ineffective. Sheldon soon realized that if the fighting of fires was to be at all successful, it had to be done in an organized fashion. Under his leadership a fire company was organized on the evening of March 11, 1846 and on March 27 officers for the company were elected. On April 30 Sheldon was chosen chief engineer of Kalamazoo's first fire department.*⁴⁵

* Sometime in 1853, Alexander J. Sheldon, whose contributions to the progress of Kalamazoo had been so noteworthy, left the village and, as far as is known, never returned. At the time of his death in 1875, the editor of the Telegraph commented that Sheldon was the friend of almost everyone in Kalamazoo and his ideas in regard to the village were twenty-five years in advance of his neighbors. He drafted a new charter for the village, which was granted by the State Legislature, and drew up a new series of bylaws. In 1873 he was the librarian of the famous Buffalo library, the Grosvenor.⁴⁶

X

Kalamazoo was indeed a progressive and rapidly growing community and its importance in the western part of the State was recognized by State officials. One indication of this was the selection of the village as the site for the State Asylum for the Insane. The hospital was formally opened for patients on August 29, 1849. At this time the grounds of the hospital comprised the block now bounded by West Main, Stuart and Kalamazoo Streets and Douglas Avenue and a strip of land to the east of Douglas Avenue. Senator Stuart traded the major portion of the institution's present site on Asylum Avenue (now Oakland Drive) for the land just referred to.

In 1853 the work of building the hospital on its present site was begun. Israel Kellogg, who had sold the Kalamazoo House in 1852, was given the contract of superintending the construction of the hospital. Construction was begun in late 1853 or early 1854, but there were delays in the work, the most serious of which was the fire that destroyed the Center Building on February 11, 1858. Arson was given as the probable cause of the fire. Dr. E. H. Van Deusen, who became a prominent citizen and philanthropist of Kalamazoo, was appointed medical supervisor of the hospital on October 19, 1855, but he did not assume his duties until October 1858.⁴⁷

XI

Throughout the 1840's and 1850's, transportation remained a serious problem. Farmers and other producers demanded all-weather roads, so that their goods and produce could be marketed more efficiently and easily. There was also much dissatisfaction over the railroads' policies, notably the famous long- and short-haul freight clauses, which meant that a farmer living near Niles paid

less freight on his grain than a farmer living near Kalamazoo.

These problems were at least partly responsible for the plank road craze that held Michigan in its grip for better than ten years. The State Legislature was beset by so many appeals for charters that "A General Plank Road Act" was adopted in 1848. This act specified that the roads were to be two to four rods wide, with sixteen feet of the width to be a smooth, good and permanent road, eight feet of which was to be covered with plank.

The first plank road company to be chartered in the Kalamazoo area was the Kalamazoo and Three Rivers Plank Road Company. Among the prominent men involved in the company were D. S. Walbridge, Israel Kellogg and H. G. Wells. Although this company sold stock for a number of years, its accomplishments were meager. The second company to be chartered in Kalamazoo was the Kalamazoo and Grand Rapid Plank Company. It began to sell its stock on August 15, 1851, but since there five plank companies in the fall of that year competing for money, funds did not come in freely. This company was controlled by E. Ransom, William De Yoe and N. A. Balch. De Yoe wagered his holdings in the concern on the outcome of the Presidential election of 1856. As a Republican, De Yoe backed Fremont, who lost the election, resulting in De Yoe's losing his interest in the plank company to a backer of Buchanan.⁴⁸

The Kalamazoo and Grand Rapids plank road was the most important one in the area. The route that the road should follow was a source of controversy for several years; finally, in January 1852, the route was established and work was begun under the direction of Gen. I. Moffatt. The road began at the Michigan Central depot, from there it went to North Street and Douglas Avenue and then on through Plainwell, Martin and Wayland to Grand Rapids. The road was completed in 1855 and cost \$70,000. Tolls

were taken over the road until a few years after the Civil War, when the completion of the Grand Rapids and Indiana Railroad forced it out of business. The toll gates were withdrawn in 1869.⁴⁹

Although the plank road companies made money for only a few (Ex-Governor E. Ransom lost his fortune in them.), they speeded up travel and traffic and were a great asset to those who could use them. Travel time from Kalamazoo to Grand Rapids was cut from two days to one day.

Along with plank walks and roads, there were other developments that made life easier and more pleasant for the people of Kalamazoo. The Kalamazoo Gas Light Company was organized in December 1856 and by June 24 of the following year, the streets of Kalamazoo were lighted with gas. The Gazette reported with enthusiasm that "Our business houses are most beautifully and brilliantly illuminated every evening, and the effect, especially on Main Street, is gorgeous and almost enchanting."⁵⁰

It was also about this time that the village water works were founded. Originally they consisted of a cistern seventeen feet wide and forty feet long, which was located on the Court House grounds. The first water mains were large logs with small holes bored through them.⁵¹

XII

Throughout this period the newspapers continued to play a significant role in the life of the village.

In June 1839, Henry Gilbert, who had published the Gazette since 1832, retired from the management of the paper and sold a half interest to E. D. Burr. Burr evidently was not successful, for in February 1841, Gilbert again assumed management of the Gazette. A few years later, in 1846, Volney Hascall took over the

Gazette and published it for many years. Hascall, who was an ardent Democrat, had above average literary abilities,^{and} certainly no concern as to the effect of his biting denunciations ~~up~~ on the Whigs and later the Republicans. His editorship of the paper made it interesting and influential.⁵²

In September 1844, Henry B. Miller, also known as Buffalo Miller,* founded the Michigan Telegraph, a Whig newspaper. The first Telegraph office was on the east side of Portage, just south of the corner of Michigan and Portage, but a year later it was moved to the basement of Huston's old store on the corner of Main and Rose.

Sometime after the founding of the Telegraph, another Whig paper was started. The publishers of the two Whig papers fought each other harder than the Gazette, which greatly disturbed Alexander J. Sheldon. Consequently, he bought up the two papers and merged them into one and continued as their editor until November 1848.⁵³

Journalism of that day operated on a no-holds-barred basis. In the May 1, 1846 issue of the Telegraph is a sample of this kind of journalism.

One of the Trustees & Co. has favored us with what he thinks, is a severe drubbing, in the columns of last week. We cannot consent to answer it, for we entertain none but the feelings of deepest pity for the writer. He is regarded here, we believe, as a hypochondriac, a rattle-brained chap, and scurrility has become a habit with him. From all our souls we pity the poor fellow. At all events we prefer his verjuice and lampblack to his liquors--the latter are distilled death, the other merely the diluted twaddle of an hysterical old maid in pantaloons.⁵⁴

* Miller published the Telegraph for two years and then moved away, first to Buffalo, New York, and then to Chicago. For many years he was in the distilling business and became involved in the Whiskey Ring. For his part in this combination, he was indicted and later jailed. Afterwards he organized the first Whiskey Pool, a development which supposedly led to the formation of other "trusts." During his career he also was a member of the New York and Illinois legislatures and ~~was~~ treasurer of Cook County for a year.⁵⁵

But when it came to vituperative journalism, Hascall of the Gazette had few equals. In 1857 he wrote that he had taken all the abuse from George Fitch, editor of the Telegraph, and George Torrey, the town clerk and Fitch's assistant, that he was going to. He then went on to speak of Fitch's "disgusting egotism and precocious depravity," his "contempt of all pecuniary and moral obligations, his naturally depraved tastes," and "his low associations." George Torrey, he continued,

← has all Mr. Fitch's bad qualities, with a still lower moral and mental organization. Without the industry or integrity to succeed in business; a pauper on the charity of those he ought rather to support; without credit; without the first qualification of a respectable citizen;... The Town Library, which was once a credit and a boast, has almost become extinct under his charge; the books and papers of the office are in the utmost confusion, and for a long time were scattered loose in the Telegraph office.⁵⁶

Fitch, on the other hand, either did not have the talent or the inclination to respond in the same way, for his representations of Hascall are comparably mild. On one occasion he spoke of Hascall as "the old lady of the Gazette," and at another time he accused Hascall of avoiding any discussion of the Kansas question "by one of his penny tin-trumpet blasts of vituperation against the Republican Party."⁵⁷

Interestingly, however, this vituperative and insulting language was not permitted to interfere with business. Fitch and Hascall got together to set uniform prices for job printing and with Herman Hascall formed a committee to invite the press of the United States and the British provinces to be present at the first annual exhibition of imported Blood and American horse breeds to be held at Kalamazoo on October 12-14, 1858.⁵⁸

Nor did abuse from rival editors or the vexations of non-paying subscribers and customers diminish the editors' enthusiasm

for Kalamazoo's present advantages or future prospects. Volney Hascall, especially, was always in there boosting the village. In June 1848 he wrote:

There's an Eden still blooms; a bright spot to the view,
'Mid thy sylvan groves, lovely Kalamazoo.⁵⁹

Until 1848 the national and international news that was printed in Kalamazoo's newspapers was very much out of date, but on April 11, 1848, Kalamazoo began receiving telegraph reports. On January 28 the Gazette^{had} reported that the telegraph wires would soon be in town, for they were now between Jackson and Marshall.

XIII

The settlement and development of a new country has always been an interesting and challenging experience. Generations succeeding the pioneer generation often speak of those days as "the good old days." Those days, however, were not always tranquil and good, and the records of that day give graphic evidence that the pioneers of Kalamazoo had to contend with disease, sickness, crime and delinquency.

By the late 1840's, disorderly conduct and delinquency was becoming a serious problem. In the June 2, 1849 issue of the Telegraph we find a description of the juvenile delinquency that was making its appearance in the village:

Among the remarkable products of nature in this prolific western country, may be mentioned a crop of boys, raised or rather growing wild, in our villages, of which we have a surplus at this present writing, and could spare enough to populate any place less redundant than our own.

Political meetings, concerts, exhibitions at the Court House are disturbed by their noisy demonstrations of feet and lungs, of several scores of boys. They demand free admission, but once in proceed to disturb those who are in, more interested in their smartness than in learning anything.⁶⁰

Shortly after this article was printed, the village trustees adopted an ordinance (No. 16) to curb riotous assemblies, indecent

or insulting conduct, language or behavior in streets or elsewhere in the village, or violation of the Sabbath. Fines for these offenses were not to exceed \$100.⁶¹

Heavy drinking and drunkenness were problems that greatly disturbed many, who felt that alcoholic beverages were one of the greatest curses of the day. The early 1840's saw a great growth of the temperance movement. The temperance revivals of Augustus Littlejohn mightily stirred Kalamazoo and the surrounding area, for Littlejohn was a colorful and dynamic speaker, whose eccentricities accentuated his appeal. His work gave the temperance cause a tremendous boost.

People were stirred, at times amused, and possibly infuriated by the lectures of Littlejohn, but most of them must have chuckled over the story that George Torrey printed in the Telegraph about old farmer Fuller. One day Fuller came to town and visited the saloons. This happened to be a day when the streets were very muddy and he had to cross Main Street. The ash pole that the Whigs had erected cast a shadow across Main Street, and Fuller walked across the street on the shadow of the pole, thinking that it was a log.⁶²

By the early 1850's the temperance movement had made such an impact that a prohibition law for the State was approved by the legislature on February 12, 1853. On June 24 the voters of Kalamazoo approved the law by a vote of 410 to 117; the majority in the State was around 20,000. This law prohibited the manufacture of intoxicating beverages and traffic therein.⁶³

Even though the law had been approved by a sizable majority, it soon faced heavy opposition, not only in Kalamazoo, but also in the State. It was appealed to the Michigan Supreme Court, but the court found the law constitutional. The temperance advocates had

expected great things from the law, but in less than six months after it went into effect, they realized that its success in suppressing the liquor traffic would not meet the expectations of the proponents of the law.⁶⁴

XIV

Sickness and disease were menaces that people survived rather than cured. The obituary notices in the Gazette and Telegraph give silent evidence that life for the very young and adult young was extremely precarious, in spite of the boast that Kalamazoo was a healthy place in which to live. S. K. Selkrig's advertisement of himself as a Daguerrean artist, with offices over the bookstore, points up the tragic prevalence of infant and childhood mortality. In his notice Selkrig urges parents to have likenesses made of their children "who are so liable at any moment to be removed by death" without delay. A perfect likeness, he said, would cost only a few shillings.⁶⁵

Kalamazoo had doctors who undoubtedly did their best to arrest the course of disease, but their medications and the panaceas sold in the drug stores, in spite of their vaunted efficacy, seem often to have been administered in vain.

Among the patent medicines advertised in the papers were Dean's Celebrated Chemical Plaster, Dr. Spohn's headache remedy, Oldrig's Balm of Columbia, and Indian Panacea. The latter, sold by L. P. Starkey and Lucius L. Clark, was practically limitless in the diseases it could cure. Among those mentioned were rheumatism, scrofula or King's Evil, sciatica or hip gout, incipient cancers, salt rheum, syphilitic or mercurian diseases, ulcers of every description, fistulas, scald head, scurvy and erisipelas. The ad went on to say that the medicine had cured about 503 cases.⁶⁶

Cholera, however, was the disease that struck terror into every heart. Every issue of the papers during the cholera season carried the statistics of ~~the~~ deaths from cholera in the United States and Europe. One issue of the Gazette noted that forty-six deaths had occurred in St. Louis during the weekend ending May 1, 1849. Until the fall of 1850, the Asiatic cholera had never struck in Kalamazoo, but there was always the fear that it might.

On October 1 a group of Dutch immigrants, led by Paulus den Bleyker, arrived in Kalamazoo, and took up temporary lodging in the Exchange Hotel. The first member of the party became ill on October 3 and the following day six boarders at the hotel were taken violently ill and all died subsequently. Before the disease had run its course, seven of the Dutch group and eight others died.

Great excitement and near hysteria swept over the village. The Gazette described the sickness as an "Awful and Mysterious Calamity." Many in Kalamazoo felt the symptoms of the dread disease; even those in perfect health imagined "the insidious initiatory stages of this disease."

At first it was believed that the persons who became ill had been poisoned. In order to determine the cause of the deaths, Robert Clark Kedzie, a medical student at the University of Michigan, and Charles S. D'Arcambal, a druggist of Kalamazoo, conducted a post mortem, but found no evidence of poison. Kedzie later wrote a report on the disease.⁶⁷

XV

Although life was hard, uncertain and bleak when judged by modern standards, it was not without fun and its brighter moments.

As Kalamazoo grew larger, it received more attention from the entertainment world. On Saturday, July 30, 1841, a menagerie

and circus performed at Kalamazoo. Among the attractions were living wild animals, equestrian and gymnastic performances, and a "large and splendid band of musicians." Admission was fifty cents for boxes and twenty-five cents for pit seats.

It is quite impossible for those who are living in a world where there is so much entertainment and activity to realize what a circus meant to a small community. The winters, especially for the rural people, were long and drab, and spring was a season of hectic activity. And then would come the announcement that the circus was coming to town--a most splendid and magnificent exhibition, which usually did not live up to its advance billing. But no matter, it still was the biggest and grandest thing that had happened that year. The children and young people came and gaped at the animals, the roustabouts and entertainers, whose condescension and poise seemed to be that of another world. The performances held everyone enthralled; for an hour or two all were carried away to a world that was exotic and romantic.

After 1840, traveling theatricals and performers began to appear more frequently at Kalamazoo. On June 2, 1848, the famous Tom Thumb appeared at the Court House. Tom Thumb was very popular, especially with the ladies, both young and old. In early June, 1849, the Alleghanians, who were on their way home from a western, performed at the Court House for just one evening. Their concert consisted of new and popular songs, duets, trios and quartets.

Many prominent persons appeared before Kalamazoo audiences during the 1850's. Horace Greeley lectured to one of the largest audiences ever assembled in Kalamazoo, although the editor of the Gazette did not think much of his "sad jumble." He returned in December 1858 and spoke before the Ladies' and Young Men's Literary

Associations on the subject of "Great Men." Other notables who appeared in Kalamazoo were Ralph Waldo Emerson, Josiah Quincy, Jr., Dr. Joseph Sill, Sen. John P. Hale and Carl Schurz.

The forming of associations and societies continued to be a popular pastime. Most of these were short-lived, but while they lasted they undoubtedly alleviated boredom and made life more interesting for its members. One of the more lasting organizations was the Kalamazoo County Horticultural Society, which was organized on February 28, 1852. H. G. Wells was elected president, F. E. Woodward, librarian, and H. Gilbert, corresponding secretary. Debates were often featured in the programs of these associations. An exciting subject discussed before the Young Men's Literary Society was that of woman's rights. Another topic debated that same year, this time before the Kalamazoo Literary Society, was: Are the present and prospective affairs of Europe such as to warrant the interference of the government of the United States?

Picnics, especially those held on holidays like the Fourth of July, were popular amusements. The famous picnic held in Bissel Humphrey's "fine park" which fronted on Main and Portage and reached as far as South Street, on July 5, 1845, was one that was talked about and laughed over for a generation or more. Unknown to most of the drinkers, spirits had been added to a tub of lemonade and this produced singular effects on the locomotive and intellectual systems of those who drank the lemonade.⁶⁸

July 4 celebrations, although not held every year, were fairly common. The celebration of 1848 was probably typical. On that day the festivities began at sunrise with a national salute of thirty guns and the ringing of bells. At ten o'clock the procession formed in front of the Kalamazoo House and then proceeded to

the Court House for a program. This consisted of music by the Kalamazoo band, a prayer, music by a choir, martial music, the reading of the Declaration of Independence, an oration by a local minister, an original ode by George Torrey, the benediction and more music by the band. Then the procession returned to the Kalamazoo House, where dinner was served to all who wished to partake. The ~~celebration~~ day ~~was~~ concluded with the firing of cannon and bonfires. Two men of the village provided the powder free of charge.⁶⁹

Probably the most significant celebration of the period was the observance of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the founding of Kalamazoo on June 21, 1854. The event was sponsored by the Ladies' Library Association.

For a while it seemed as if rain would ruin the festivities, but by eleven in the morning the weather had cleared and the sun shone brilliantly. "The rain of the morning had cooled and purified the air, and all was animation beneath the oaken shade."

At about 10:30 the citizens and many strangers assembled at the Court House. The program began with a few appropriate remarks by the President of the Day, Ex-Governor Ransom. These were followed by music by the Kalamazoo band, a song by the assembly, a prayer by the Rev. Mr. Hoyt, a song by the Glee Club, and an eloquent address by Col. F. W. Curtenius. Another song by the Glee Club and an original poem by the Hon. E. Lakin Brown concluded the program. The final event in the festivities of the day was the serving of dinner to three hundred people at Firemen's Hall.

As one might expect, Colonel Curtenius, in the oration of the day, did much pointing with pride; yet his description of Kalamazoo does enable us to see the village as it looked to an observer in 1854.

In his address Curtenius spoke of

The beautiful native trees, which are usually the first object of attack to the pioneer, are here allowed to stand in their primitive grace; and add more than all other objects, to the loveliness of the village. The prevalence of the forest trees has given the place the title of 'Burr Oak City' though it has only a village charter. The trees, of stately growth, and refreshing shade, give it the appearance of greater age than belongs to it; for it is little more than 25 years ago since the first civilized settlements were made here.

Then he mentioned the blocks of noble buildings and others in the process of construction "which bade fair to excell their predecessors." There was also "a mansion almost buried in foliage, and another half smothered with roses; and church after church rises up."

In describing the inhabitants of the village, he said that its population was more American than foreign and that they were "distinguished for their enterprise, public spirit, intelligence, and pride of their chosen dwelling place." 70

XVI

Another meeting was held on the same day as the Quarter Centennial Celebration which would have a much greater impact on the future of Kalamazoo and the nation as a whole, even though its attendance was much smaller. This assembly was one of the crucial ones in the formation of the Republican Party and had its genesis in the great issues that were troubling and splitting the nation.

In January 1854, Stephen A. Douglas, senator from Illinois, submitted his famous or infamous Kansas-Nebraska Bill to Congress. This bill, which became law on May 30, reopened the problem of the extension of slavery, which most Americans hoped had been settled by the Compromise of 1850, and virtually opened the territories of Kansas and Nebraska to slavery. This law split the Democratic Party.

On January 12, 1854, the Free Democrats of Michigan called for a state convention to meet at Jackson on February 22. At this convention it was decided to try to gain the support of the Whigs and form a new party. Soon after this meeting, another one was held in Detroit for the prominent newspaper editors of the State and George A. Fitch, editor of the Kalamazoo Telegraph was present. Fitch was much impressed by the speeches he heard at this gathering and in April wrote in his paper that the old parties had outlived their usefulness and that a new political party should be formed. The following statements of Fitch are indicative of the feelings of many Americans in the spring of 1854:

We cannot look to any other movements of the old parties in reference to the Nebraska bill and questions touching slavery that bring any promise of success, nor to any broken-down politicians; but we may look with strong hope of success to see these measures consummated by honorable and active young men of the state, those who have not trimmed their sails to catch every breeze which swept across the political sea; those who have not acted for years as mere weathercocks of public opinion, but active untiring young men who shall enter with assurance and vigor into the field--those capable of grasping the questions of the time and wringing from them their meanings.

Soon a call was issued for a mass convention to be held at Kalamazoo on June 21. This call reminded the "Fellow Citizens-- A fearfully momentous question is agitating the American people," and that "Slavery is RAMPANT in the Capitol.... It makes and un-makes Presidents...." At the Kalamazoo meeting Samuel Ransom and several other men were appointed to frame resolutions. This committee reported back with strong resolutions condemning the further extension of slavery. The resolutions were joyfully adopted and exerted a strong influence on the meeting held later at Jackson. After the Kalamazoo meeting had adjourned, a number of its leaders met at the home of Dr. J. A. B. Stone for a private conference.⁷²

A few days later, many of the prominent men of Kalamazoo met in front of the Court House and there signed a call for a convention to be held at Jackson. Among the men who signed were F. W. Curtenius, T. H. Trask, F. K. Woodward, S. S. Cobb, D. S. Walbridge, A. Cameron, Silas Hubbard and H. G. Wells.

The convention "under the Oaks" at Jackson was held on July 6, 1854, and was attended by many Free Democrats, Free Soilers and Whigs. A generation later it was still the proud boast of those who attended that they had been present at the founding of the Republican Party.* D. S. Walbridge was chosen permanent chairman of the convention and Jacob M. Howard, a Kalamazoo lawyer, chairman of the committee on resolutions. The resolutions presented by this committee were unanimously adopted.⁷³

Hascall of the Gazette deplored the founding of the new party and was certain that it could not succeed. He said that the Jackson meeting was an aggregation of all the antagonistic elements in the political, moral and religious world and that the new party was united on only one point and for that reason would not stand.

The new party, he continued, was made up of

← Maine Law men and anti-Maine-Law men, Tipplers and Teto-talers, Spiritual Rappers and Orthodox Divines, Garrisonian Disunionists and Saviors of the Union, Infidels and Christians, traitorous Democrats and recreant Whigs, moderate-Free Soilers and rampant Abolitionists, broken-down Politicians and blood thirsty Office-Seekers.⁷⁴

And what hurt Hascall most of all was that five Democrats of the village had joined the Republican Party.

The Republican Party lost no time in nominating a slate of candidates for State offices. Jacob M. Howard was the candidate.

* That any one convention can be cited as the one where the Republican Party was founded is questionable. The name Republican was first adopted at a local political meeting held in Ripon, Wisconsin, on February 28, 1854. The name was formally adopted by the state convention which met in Jackson, Michigan.

for attorney-general, D. S. Walbridge for representative from the third Congressional district and E. Lakin Brown of Schoolcraft candidate for State senator. Surprisingly, all three were elected in the fall elections.

The first national Republican Convention, to which H. G. Wells was a delegate, was held in Philadelphia and chose Gen. John Charles Fremont as its Presidential candidate.⁷⁵

On August 27 a great Republican rally, which was called in the name of "free speech, free press, free soil, free men and Fremont" was held in the Park at Kalamazoo. H. G. Wells was chairman of the executive committee in charge of arrangements and sometime in July or August he invited Abraham Lincoln to speak. Lincoln's letter of acceptance was dated August 21.⁷⁶

Although there were four main speakers at this rally, Lincoln, judging from the recollections recorded many years later, made the greatest impression. Tradition also has it that Lincoln spoke from the Indian Mound.⁷⁷

In his address Lincoln asserted that

The question of slavery, at the present day, should be not only the greatest question, but very nearly the sole question.

The question is simply this: Shall Slavery be spread into new territories, or not?...

This government is sought to be put on a new track. Slavery is to be made a ruling element in our government. The question can be avoided in but two ways. By the one, we must submit, and allow slavery to triumph, or, by the other, we must triumph over the black demon. We have chosen the latter manner. If you of the North wish to get rid of this question, you must decide between these two ways--submit and vote for Buchanan, submit and vote that slavery is a just and good thing, and immediately get rid of the question; or unite with us, and help us triumph. We would all like to have the question done away with, but we cannot submit.⁷⁸

The editor of the Gazette conceded that "Mr. Lincoln... made a very fair and argumentative address; but was far too conservative

and Union loving in his sentiments to suit his audience. "The meeting," he concluded, "was highly respectable in numbers; but in point of moral effect, through its public addresses, it was a melancholy failure."⁷⁹

Perhaps the editor of the Gazette was not impressed, but many intelligent and thinking Americans, like E. Lakin Brown of Schoolcraft were, and four years later they would work and vote to make Abraham Lincoln President of the United States.

As the decade of the fifties drew to a close, Kalamazoo was no longer a pioneer settlement and was ready to take its place as one of the more important communities in Michigan.

Chapter 4

EDUCATION AND LIBRARIES IN KALAMAZOO IN THE 1840's AND 1850's

I

Education in Kalamazoo during the 1840's was in a chaotic condition; for more than a decade school districts were reorganized and renumbered frequently.

On May 5, 1837, the Board of School Inspectors of Kalamazoo Township held a meeting at the office of the township clerk for the purpose of organizing and numbering school districts. Whatever the inspectors may have done at that meeting, their actions had little permanency. As the population of the township increased, new districts were created and the boundaries of both old and new ones were changed with great regularity, so that their original numbering lost its significance. Some of the districts had good schools, others, poor ones, and occasionally there would be one with no school.¹

Although the school inspectors, who are mentioned frequently in the early school records, organized the districts, determined their boundaries, and changed these boundaries when it was deemed advisable, their chief duty seems to have been the examining of applicants for teaching positions, and they were an

important part of the school administration of Kalamazoo until 1860.

School District No. 1 of Kalamazoo Township was organized on January 18, 1845. The early records do not indicate how this district differed from the School District No. 1 that had been organized in 1837 or even earlier. The earlier district was administered by the Board of School Inspectors, but the board of the new one apparently consisted of a moderator, assessor and director, the school inspectors evidently continuing to examine teaching applicants. On September 23, 1851, as much of school districts 1, 8, 11 and 12 as were within the corporate limits of Kalamazoo passed under the exclusive jurisdiction of the president and trustees of the village corporation. This consolidated district was designated as District No. 1 and is the district that today comprises almost all of the city of Kalamazoo and most of its suburbs.²

The village seems to have had four common schools, as they were called, at this time, one each for the four districts in the village until their consolidation in 1851. In 1848 a schoolhouse, known as the "Red Schoolhouse,"¹ was erected on the southwest corner of Cedar and Locust Streets. The construction of a brick building was completed the following summer.³

II

Progressive minded citizens were not happy with the state of education. On October 2, 1846, the Telegraph noted that the "cause of education is sadly neglected among us," and ten days later a county education society was organized, of which Eph. Ranson was the president and Alexander J. Sheldon, secretary. In June 1847, 139 of the citizens of the village signed a petition asking for a union school, and two months later the Gazette in an editorial urged that the school districts of the village be united.⁴

A united district, the editorial emphasized, would be able to procure "philosophical apparatus," a globe, maps, charts and a library, with which a common school should be provided. The accomplishment of these desirable objectives, the editor continued, would be extremely burdensome if not impossible for the individual districts. Although the article had little to say about it, opposition to the concept of a united district seems to have been strong at this time.⁵

The great need of the village, even after the consolidation of the school districts, continued to be adequate schools. In the fall of 1853, the director of the district reported that there were 924 children, between the ages of four and eighteen, living in ~~its~~ ^{the} district and that the four little common schools could accommodate only fifty each, leaving seven hundred children to be cared for.⁶

Although there was considerable opposition in Kalamazoo to the idea of one large school--a union school, the principle was not a new one. A State law, passed in 1848, permitted the establishment of union or consolidated schools. Jonesville and one other town in Michigan claim the distinction of having the first union schools under this law.⁷

A letter to the Gazette in support of a union school indicates some of the objections that were raised. The writer notes that the question has been seriously asked, "Would you like your child to sit on the same bench with all the low Irish, Dutch, & Niggers?" Then he continued,

The objection pre-supposes an inequality between our children and the others... In either case it becomes our duty to try to elevate the lower to the standard of the other...; the Union school must be the select school in Michigan.⁸

The Gazette, in backing the union school, reminded the voters of Kalamazoo that the village would soon have eight hundred children of school age, and that number would require eight common schools. But small schools, the editor asserted, cannot afford the apparatus for teaching geography, astronomy, chemistry and natural philosophy, and even if this equipment were available, one teacher would not have time for all these studies. And eight schoolhouses, he continued, with apparatus and playgrounds would cost \$20,000; a union school would cost only \$10,000 and in such a school the children of the rich and poor would be on an equal footing. A union school would also assure uniformity of school texts and would be better able to secure good teachers. When the issue ~~of the union school~~ was put to vote, it carried by a majority of 180 to 50.⁹

This favorable vote, however, did not assure the building of a union schoolhouse. About a year later a school meeting was held at Firemen's Hall to consider ~~its~~ location ~~of the union school~~ and the manner of raising the money for ^{its} construction, ~~it~~. Nearly two and a half years later an adjourned meeting of the voters of the district was held in the Council Room and H. G. Wells was appointed chairman pro tem. This meeting was then adjourned to the following Wednesday evening, when the union school project was to be approved or rejected.

On that evening a large and an enthusiastic group assembled at Firemen's Hall and the meeting was called to order by H. Gilbert. The motion that a central schoolhouse be built as soon as practicable, plus two small schoolhouses for the small children, was passed by acclamation. Then the motion, made by the Hon. Charles E. Stuart, that the Board of Trustees be instructed that the Park

was not available as the site for the union school was also adopted by acclamation. Evidently the people who had the responsibility of selling the union school to the people of Kalamazoo did their work well.¹⁰

In January 1857 the Board of Trustees bought five acres of land from Arad C. Balch for \$6,500 as the site for the new school, the present location of old Central High School. By this time the four common schools of the village were so crowded that numbers of children had to be turned away every day.¹¹

The cornerstone of the Union School was laid on July 23, 1857, and the Masonic order was invited to conduct the ceremony. Two hundred and fifty Masons and scholars from the various schools marched in the procession. Masonic and village records were placed in a small copper box. The address of the day was given by the Rev. E. Taylor, who concluded by saying,

'Into the edifice to be upreared on this cornerstone, may many an ashlar fresh quarried from the ledge, and rough-edged, be brought, and go hence chiseled into a shape that the Almighty Architect shall pronounce, 'well formed, true and trusty.'

The new school was built of brick and the style of its architecture was Normanesque; its dimensions were 90 feet by 80 feet and 4 inches and it had four stories, including the basement. Among the special rooms in the building were a chemistry laboratory, a painting and drawing room and a library room. Each school room was well lighted and provided with large and light wardrobes. The building had four entrances, each one opening on a street. The contracts for building the new school were awarded to Israel Kellogg and Pelikan Stevens, both prominent builders in early Kalamazoo.¹²

The first term of school in the "new and commodious Union

School" was to open on Monday, December 6, 1858, and the dedication was set for December 15, but both events were postponed to allow time for the completion and testing of the heating system. The building was dedicated on January 26, 1859 and a large crowd was present to inspect the new school. It was reported that most of those who attended the dedicatory exercises were "delighted and surprised at the extent, excellent interior-arrangement, and fine finish of the structure." Daniel Putnam*, who had been superintendent or director of the schools of the district, was appointed principal of the school, at a salary of \$1,000 a year.¹³

Another important event in the history of the Kalamazoo school system was the approval by the State Legislature on February 12, 1859, of "The Act to Amend an Act to Incorporate the Village of Kalamazoo and the acts Amendatory thereto, approved April 1, 1850". This act provided that the lands within the limits of the village corporation and such contiguous territory, as was or might later be annexed for school purposes, should constitute a single school district, to be designated as School District No. 1 of the village and township of Kalamazoo.

The act further provided that at the annual school meeting of the district on Monday, September 1, the qualified voters of the district were to elect by ballot six trustees, who together should constitute a district board of education. Two of the members were to be elected for a one-year term, two for a two-year term, and

* Daniel Putnam was appointed superintendent of schools in April 1857. He had great skill in handling children, was an able administrator, capable in public relations. He established education on a solid footing in Kalamazoo and is fittingly known as the Father of the Kalamazoo High School. Putnam also seems to have been responsible for persuading the village board to adopt a uniform series of textbooks for all the schools in the village.¹⁴

two for a three-year term. The Board was given the power to hire any and all necessary teachers and no examination by the school inspectors was to be required.¹⁵

On August 20, about eighty men of the village signed a written recommendation that a meeting, irrespective of party affiliations, be held at the Court House on the evening of September 3 to nominate suitable candidates for the new board.¹⁶

At the school election, held on September 5, H. G. Wells, Israel Kellogg, D. S. Walbridge, Curtis W. Hall, Silas Hubbard and Frank Little,* all well-known and respected citizens of Kalamazoo, were chosen for the District Board of Education. At least one of the men was a Democrat. As the editor of the Gazette observed, these men held the future of the Union School in their hands, and, it may be added, for well over a century the Board of Education of School District No. 1 has been responsible for the development and progress of education and library service in Kalamazoo. The only essential change in the constitution of the present Board is that ^{today} it consists of seven members instead of six.

The newly-elected Board of Education organized on Thursday evening, September 8. D. S. Walbridge was elected president, H. G. Wells, treasurer, and Frank Little, secretary. At the first meeting of the Board, Walbridge appointed the following standing committees: Buildings, furniture, grounds, improvements and fuel, Kellogg and Little; Teachers, schools, textbooks apparatus and library, Wells and Hall; Finance, accounts, claims and printing,

* Frank Little, who for over fifty years was to be a prominent citizen of Kalamazoo, came to the village from Richland in 1852. He and his father Henry had come to the area in the early 1830's. Little was a candidate for the office of Register of the County in 1852, and although he was, according to Volney Hascall, a man who had good business qualifications, a well cultivated mind and was urbane and gentlemanly in his deportment, he, like most Democrats of those days, lost the election. In June 1856, he was appointed superintendent of schools, but held that position for only a year. He was also business manager of the Gazette.¹⁷

Hubbard and Kellogg.¹⁸

III

Kalamazoo College, or as it was known then, the Literary Institute, became a significant factor in the educational scene of Kalamazoo during this period. During the 1840's the Literary Institute was still combined with the Branch of the University of Michigan and its future was uncertain. In the spring of 1843, however, an event occurred that influenced its development for twenty years. This was the arrival in Kalamazoo of a remarkable couple, James A. B. Stone and his wife Lucinda Hinsdale Stone. For twenty years the story of Kalamazoo College was that of the life and labors of the Stones; it was largely through their efforts that the college attained a stability and direction that enabled it to survive.

James Andrus Blinn Stone was a man of courage and independence. Although reared and educated as a member of the Congregational Church, he joined the Baptist Church as a young man. He advocated the abolition of slavery at a time when abolitionism was unpopular, even in New England. He also favored fuller rights for women and co-education, and his wife shared these convictions.¹⁹

When Stone became principal of the combined Branch and Literary Institute, the enrollment was 86. It was therefore necessary to employ two assistants, besides Mrs. Stone, who was principal of the ladies' department. Although both Stones advocated or favored co-education, public opinion made it unpolitic, at least in theory, to have classes where male and female students sat together. In actual practice, however, this happened fairly frequently. One result of Mrs. Stone's convictions and influence was that Kalamazoo became a center of progressive leadership for

women. Forty-two of the ninety students during the 1845/46 school term were women.

Dr. Stone's salary as principal of the Literary Institute was a modest one. From 1843 to 1846 he received an annual stipend of \$200 a year, which was supplemented by small tuition fees and whatever salary he received as pastor of the Baptist Church.

In 1845 the Baptist Convention passed a resolution to take measures "for the Theological Education of pious young men for the Gospel Ministry," a resolution that significantly influenced the future development of Kalamazoo College; for Stone immediately began to raise funds to insure the proposed institution for Kalamazoo. Five persons gave a total of \$750 to purchase a suitable plot of ground for the seminary. The Literary Institute, which at that time owned land that today comprises some of the most valuable property in Kalamazoo, made arrangements with the proposed seminary to relinquish its property in return for the right to use the property that the seminary had purchased. Then the Michigan Central Railroad paid the seminary \$500 for the right to cross its property, so that the campus of Kalamazoo College, along with other land since disposed of, cost only \$250.

Work on the Seminary building progressed slowly and as late as the fall of 1848, only the walls of the building were up. The structure was completed about 1854 and was known as Williams Hall. The cornerstone of Kalamazoo Female College was laid on August 29, 1857. In the cornerstone was placed the "eloquent" address, "An Address to Our Successors, " of the Rev. S. Haschell. The building, which was to be known as Kalamazoo Hall, was dedicated in November 1859.²⁰

IV

After waiting for ten years, Kalamazoo finally got a library. The township library probably was begun in 1845, for in an old record book mention is made of two libraries as early as 1845-- the Township Library and the School Library. According to this record, books from both libraries were issued to the directors of the various districts in the township. The first issue of a book from the school library seems to have been made on August 16 and the first one from the township library on September 2. The books in these two collections were for the use of all the schools in the township and were checked out by the directors of the districts; the record book carefully notes when a director checked out a book and when he returned it.²¹

These books, however, were not always returned promptly. In the April 23, 1847 issue of the Gazette is printed a notice requesting the directors to return without delay to the Town Clerk's office any works they may have which belong to the Town Library. Five years later, the directors were again urged to return the books within thirty days, or suit would be commenced against them. ~~urged to return the books belonging to the town library within thirty days from date of notice, or suit would be commenced against them.~~

The "Records of School Inspectors" also contains a "Catalogue of Books in Township Library of Kalamazoo." This catalog is really no more than a list of the 134 titles that were in the library. Eleven books of a juvenile series and sixty-three books purchased for the school libraries are also listed. A number of these books are still in the Kalamazoo Library.

Many adults of today would find these books heavy going,

although school children of a hundred years took many of them as a matter of course. Among the books listed are the following: Napier's Peninsular War, Rollins's History, the Reformation by DeAubigne, Uncle Barnaby, Famous Indians, Agricultural Chemistry, Moffat's South Africa, Washington by Marshall, Sketch Book by Irving, Columbus and Vespucci and Conversations on Natural History.²²

The township library probably did not meet the reading needs of the people of Kalamazoo, for we find that on June 5, 1845, S. K. (Kelsey) Selkrig published the following notice:

Circulating Library--The subscriber would respectfully announce to the inhabitants of Kalamazoo and vicinity that he had commenced a Circulating Library. The new publications of the day will be added as soon as received, and the proprietor pledges himself that he will spare no pains to keep an extensive assortment of the best kind. Standard works will be added from time to time in such quantities as the public shall demand.

An alphabetic list of Selkrig's library gives one an insight into the kinds of books people were interested in reading. Some of the titles were Arabian Nights, American Pioneer, Book of Murders, Book of Homilies, Cause & Cure of Infidelity, Complete Letter Writer, Life of Lewis Cass, Duncombes Free Banking, Darby's Tour of Detroit, The Fortune Hunter, Foxe's Book of Martyrs, Life of Frederick the Great and Hand Book of Hydropathy.²³

And then there was Sheldon's Bookstore, where such interesting titles like Tokeah, or the White Rose, Adventures of Capt. Suggs, The Only Daughter, Prescott's Mexico, Gibbons's Rome, Lyell's Geology, The White Slave, Poe's Tales and Henry Russell, a Tale of the Year 2000 could be purchased.²⁴

V

During this period the State was still trying to choose between township and school district libraries. Provision for the compulsory taxation of townships for the support of public

libraries had been passed by the State Legislature in 1843. Dr. William Mottram, who practiced medicine in Kalamazoo from 1850 until his death in 1891, had represented St. Joseph County in the Legislature in 1843 and had sponsored the bill which provided for the support of public libraries. The results of this legislation were poor; directors of the school libraries either did not get any books, or let the books be scattered. It should be noted though, that in 1842 the Michigan Legislature had passed an act making the city of Detroit one school district and obligating the school board to establish a library.²⁵

The Michigan Constitution of 1850 further strengthened the cause of public libraries, by authorizing the Legislature to provide for the establishment of at least one library in each township and specifying that all penal fines be exclusively applied to the support of such libraries.

In 1855 the school district library was again favored to replace the larger, centralized township collections. Four years later the qualified voters of a township were empowered to vote whether they would continue the township library or return to the school district library. If the majority of the voters favored the latter, then the township school inspectors were to divide the township book collection among the school districts in the township in proportion to the number of children of legal school age in each district. The district school board would then be held accountable for the proper care and preservation of the district library and was given the authority to provide for its safe keeping. The school boards were also to prescribe the time for taking and returning books, assess and collect all fines and penalties for the loss of or damage to the books, appoint the librarian and determine the place where the books were to be kept in the school-

houses. The law further provided that the library moneys of a township should be apportioned in the same manner as the primary school funds.

About two-thirds of the townships changed to the district system and for a while everything went well. The State Board of Education had been given the authority to prepare a list of books, unsectarian in character, suitable for district or township libraries, and contract with the lowest responsible bidder to furnish the same in such numbers as might be wanted at stipulated prices. This law, however, was soon violated by school districts which bought from other than the prescribed list; orders ^{then} fell off and could no longer be let to advantage. In 1865 the State Board of Education's book list went out of existence. Since there was no mandatory provision for an annual appropriation for the support of school district libraries other than penal fines, which often were small and frequently diverted from their proper use, the financial support of these libraries was usually inadequate.²⁶

In spite of legislative uncertainties and other setbacks, libraries were founded in Michigan during the decades of the 1840's and 1850's. Battle Creek had a school district library as early as 1840; it later came under the jurisdiction of the township officials and in 1871, when the city was incorporated, the library was organized under the Board of Education, where it still is. One of the earliest township libraries in the region was that of Otsego. Otsego was settled by a few pioneers in 1839, when Allegan County was largely a wilderness and town meetings were held in private homes. The early records of the county reflect hazardous times: forests had to be felled, roads and bridges built, bounties offered for wolves, but despite frontier privations, schools,

churches and libraries were remembered. In 1842 or 1844, just three or five years after the first town meeting, a vote was taken to raise \$25 for a township library. Of the forty votes cast, twenty-one were in favor of the library.

The library in Ann Arbor was founded in 1856 as a school library, and in 1858 a citizens' movement organized the Grand Rapids Library Association.

V

Since publicly supported libraries failed to meet the needs of the people, frequent attempts were made to organize literary or library associations or societies. Many of the public libraries in Michigan were originally association libraries.

In 1851 a Ladies Library Association was organized in Flint. This association not only collected books, but it also bought a site and erected a building for its library. This building was dedicated in 1868, Governor H. H. Crapo delivering the dedicatory address. In the same year the library was given to the school board, with the provision that it be maintained as a public library. At that time the library, including the books in the school collection, numbered 6,000 volumes.²⁷

In Kalamazoo numerous attempts were made to establish an adequate library. As early as March 1846, a meeting was announced for those who were "desirous of uniting for improvement in science and literature and to accumulate a library." The meeting was to be held on "Monday evening next at 7½ o'clock at the Branch."²⁸

During the following decade various individuals and groups made serious attempts to get libraries started in Kalamazoo, but most of them failed because of a general lack of interest in a good library. In the fall of 1855, the editor of the Gazette

lamented that the Kalamazoo Literary Association had aroused so little public interest, and concluded that the want of interest in scientific matters reflected but little credit to the community. This project should have succeeded, he went on to say, because Kalamazoo did not ^{have a} public library suited to the needs of the people; a town the size of Kalamazoo should have a public library of not less than 2,000 or 3,000 volumes, consisting of standard works in the various fields of the arts and sciences and the tables of such a library should be supplied with the leading periodicals and reviews. This was the kind of library, the editor concluded, that the association had wanted to establish.²⁹

Since the township library was inadequate and libraries sponsored by literary associations or societies had difficult going, private individuals made a number of attempts to establish circulating or subscription libraries. In the early fall of 1856, William Gallop (or Gallup) was in Kalamazoo trying to start a circulating library. A week later, on October 3, the public was notified that the Union Literary Library was in operation, and that members could get their books by calling at the library room in the Court House. The fee for the use of the library was one dollar a year.³⁰

This project evidently was also unsuccessful, for about a year and a half later, a commercial library and reading room was begun in connection with Gregory's Commercial College. It reportedly was supplied with important newspapers and periodicals and such standard works as might be necessary for a first-rate library. Membership in the library cost fifty cents a quarter and the reading room was open to subscribers week days and evenings until nine o'clock. Few libraries in the country offered such liberal hours and one wishes that there were some way of learning how well

this ^{one} ~~library~~ was patronized.

The library picture, however, was not altogether one of failure: the Ladies' Library Association of Kalamazoo was one of those that succeeded. It was one of the important achievements of the early 1850's, and may have been the first woman's club in all the West and second only in date to the Sorosis of New York City and the New England's Woman's Club of Boston. Mrs. Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, who was known in later years as the "Mother of Women's Clubs," spearheaded the movement that resulted in the organization of the Ladies' Library Association of Kalamazoo.³²

The Gazette reported in early February 1852, that a number of the enterprising and intellectual ladies of the village had taken measures to form a Ladies' Library Association for the purpose of social intercourse and mental improvement, and that they were meeting at the Congregational Church. The library, however, was at the home of Col. George Rice and was open from three to five on Friday afternoons; it was later moved to the Court House. On April 2 an ice cream social was held at the Court House for the benefit of the association. The organization held monthly meetings and usually sponsored the winter lecture series. Early in 1854 its library consisted of four hundred volumes of "well-selected works," and fifty cents entitled a lady and one dollar a gentleman to all the privileges of the society for one year. About three years later it was said that the library was one of the finest in the State and the association asked the people of Kalamazoo to consider whether it wouldn't be wise to support it: ~~library~~ rather than a "transient private enterprise."³³

Many of the original volumes in the library of the Ladies' Library Association are still extant and anyone interested in learning what people of over a century ago found interesting

will find it worthwhile to browse through this library. Some of ~~its~~ volumes ~~in the library~~ were part of a private collection as early as 1847.

Not quite a year after the founding of the Ladies' Library Association, some of the young men of the village tried to organize a society. One or two meetings were held and plans and programs for the association were discussed, including a library. Apparently nothing came of this attempt, for two years later the Gazette again reported that a movement was on foot to establish a Young Men's Association. The first meeting was called for February 14 and T. S. Atlee, one of the literary lights of Kalamazoo and receiver of the Land Office, was scheduled to give the opening address. The leaders of the Ladies' Library Association were urged to be present to offer encouragement. It was later reported that the meeting, which was held in Firemen's Hall, was well attended.

A year later it was noted that the meetings were becoming very interesting and that a library reading room, with H. G. Wells as librarian, had ^{been} established for the benefit of the members.

Over two years later, on June 2, 1858, the Young Men's Library Association was organized, with H. E. Hascall, editor of the Telegraph, president. Whether this organization was the outgrowth of the Young Men's Association or an entirely new one is not clear. The latter society, however, seems to have been primarily a library association and planned to have its library room on the second floor of Parker's building on South Burdick, not far from Firemen's Hall.³⁴

The constitution and by-laws of the Young Men's Association stipulated that the librarian was to attend the rooms of the

association every evening, except Sunday, "from twilight till 10 o'clock, to superintend the books, papers, and other property of the Association in the Reading Room. He shall keep a register of the books, maps, charts, papers, magazines, etc., belonging to the Association and keep them in proper order."³⁵

But the announcement of a library seems to have been premature. Evidently the young men had difficulties in getting their organization under way; not until the summer of 1859 was the library of the Young Men's Library Association formally opened in the reading rooms on the second floor of Parker's store. The association and its library seem to have flourished after this, for they served the men of Kalamazoo for nearly twenty years.³⁶

In this atmosphere of the organizing of library associations, the township library deemed it advisable to broaden its services. In January 1859, George Torrey, the librarian, informed the public that at a recent meeting of the Board of School Inspectors, it was voted to open the library every Saturday afternoon from two to five for the benefit of those desiring to borrow books.³⁷

Libraries were small in those days. The Kalamazoo Township Library probably had less than three hundred volumes and many of these were in the hands of the school directors. In 1858 the State of Michigan had 472 township libraries, whose holdings totaled 168,179 volumes, or an average of about 350 per library. Even the Library of Congress, today one of the largest libraries in the world, contained only 45,000 volumes; these, however, were "arranged in chapters in which all branches of learning are well represented."³⁸

Even though libraries were small and exceedingly primitive by modern standards, there was a great deal of interest in their growth and development; so much so that the next fifty years would see both libraries and the library profession come into their own.

Chapter 5

KALAMAZOO AND THE CIVIL WAR, 1860-1872

I

As the decade of the 1860's opened, it was obvious to thinking Americans that the climax of more than a generation of bitterness and controversy was at hand. The distrust and intransigency obtaining between the North and South had reached the place where compromise and conciliation seemed no longer possible. The South insisted, if slavery was legal and constitutional, that it had the right to go anywhere in the new territories of the nation; the North insisted just as firmly that the new territories were to be closed to slavery.

For Kalamazoo too the 1850's had been turbulent and exciting years. Although slavery, or the further extension of it, was the great issue of the day, Negroes were not highly regarded by Kalamazoo and this was likewise true of many other Northern cities and communities. Volney Hascall did not consider Negroes to be citizens. In his comments on John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, he made it clear that he had no sympathy for Brown and the abolitionists. He commended the fair trial accorded the insurrectionists and condemned the Northerners who threatened and mobbed the Southerner who tried to recover his fugitive slave. He described John

Brown and his companions as "a murderous band, fiendish conspirators, atrocious felons," and denounced "the fiendish invasion of a peaceful community." ¹

During the mid and later years of the decade, many people from Michigan and Kalamazoo went to Kansas and the letters they wrote describing the sufferings of "bleeding Kansas" and the atrocities perpetrated by slaveholders from Missouri exacerbated the inflamed and unsettled state of public opinion not only in Michigan and Kalamazoo, but in the North as a whole.

II

The pressing business of the early months of 1860 was the nomination of Presidential candidates. The Democrats met in Charleston, South Carolina, on April 27, but the Southern Democrats, disillusioned with Stephen A. Douglas, who in his debates with Lincoln had asserted the right of a people of a territory to exclude slavery (the famous Freeport heresy), refused to give him their votes. After fifty-seven ballots, in which Douglas had the majority of votes, but not the necessary two thirds, the convention adjourned until June 18, when it was to reconvene in Baltimore. By this time, however, a number of the Southern delegates had already seceded from the Charleston convention.

The Republicans met in Chicago on May 16. Since there was no building in the city large enough to hold the numerous delegates and spectators, the Republicans erected the famous "Wigwam."

When the delegates convened, Sen. William H. Stewart of New York was the favorite of many, especially the delegates from Michigan, whose leader, Zachariah Chandler, had been very ^{contemptuous} ~~contentious~~ of Lincoln ever since his appearance in Kalamazoo. So bitter was the anti-Lincoln feeling in parts of Michigan that the Massachusetts delegation, whose leader, John A. Andrew, had won the Wigwam

convention over to Lincoln on the third ballot, was all but mobbed when their train passed through Detroit on its way home.²

The regular Democrats, after remaining in session for six days, nominated Stephen A. Douglas for President and Herschel V. Johnson of Georgia for Vice-President. The Seceding Democrats also met in Baltimore and nominated John C. Breckinridge of Kentucky and Joseph Lane of Oregon. The fourth ticket in the field was that of the Constitutional Union Party, whose nominees were John Bell of Tennessee and Edward Everett of Massachusetts.

The Presidential campaign of 1860 was a stirring yet troubled one. Underlying all the excitement was the fear that the Union was on the brink of disaster. Although Lincoln himself did no active campaigning, many of the outstanding Republicans did.

Sen. William H. Seward was in Kalamazoo on September 8. The Telegraph reported that 20,000 people were present to hear him; the Gazette countered that, after deducting the townspeople, Democrats and women, probably only 4,000 Republican voters were present. But, even though the attendance had been disappointing, "the appointments for creating a display were admirably managed." An excellent idea had been the presence of ladies on horseback in the parade--the ladies made a most magnificent appearance and their presence was a good stroke; "for who can help loving the damsels, whether at home or in a Republican procession."

But Seward's address, the Gazette asserted, disappointed the crowd. It was not clear what the speaker had intended to do; either he had meant to damage Lincoln by his speech in the Park, or he failed to say what he meant, or something else was wrong. It is unfortunate that we do not have the Telegraph's account of Seward's address and the rally.³

Five weeks later, on October 16, Douglas was in Kalamazoo, and the Gazette, to the surprise of no one, enthusiastically reported both his appearance and his address. There were, according to the paper, great crowds of people present, not only from Kalamazoo and the surrounding area, but also from almost all of the neighboring towns and villages. If, as the Republicans had claimed, there were 20,000 present to hear Seward, then there were 50,000 present to hear Douglas. When he appeared in the Park, at least 30,000 were present. The two and a half acres of the Park were so closely packed that when women fainted, they had to be lifted on the shoulders of others to get air; it was impossible to get them out.⁴

In spite of all the enthusiasm that greeted Douglas, Kalamazoo nevertheless went for Lincoln by a majority of 196 votes; in the the State ^{his} ~~Lincoln's~~ majority was nearly 25,000.⁵

In commenting on the election of Lincoln, Volney Hascall predicted no disaster from the acts of Lincoln as President. From the first he had regarded ^{him} ~~Lincoln~~ with more favor than most of the other prominent Republicans; he had always had a deep respect for his personal integrity, and believed that he would carefully regard the guarantees of the Constitution and religiously respect the rights of all the States.

Shortly after the election Hascall went to Washington and his weekly letters give a vivid picture of those troubled days of uncertainty, vacillation and secession. He reported that all attempts at compromise and conciliation were being blocked by the Republican Senators, ^{and} ~~he also~~ deplored the low calibre of Michigan's Congressional delegation. According to Hascall, Michigan had not a single man who commanded the least influence in the crisis;

Senators Bingham and Zach Chandler were wholly impotent in the Senate, possessing neither the talents, nor the high personal qualifications to command the respect of even their own party colleagues. Howard of the House was somewhat better, "but altogether," he concluded, "Michigan has a delegation in Congress that is no credit to the intelligence of our people." ⁶

The Gazette approved highly of Lincoln's inaugural address. "We do not see," the writer remarked, "how any Democrat who will divest himself of prejudice, can fail to be satisfied with this enumeration of the new President's proposed policy on the administration of the government." ⁷

When Fort Sumter fell on April 14, Hascall said that the only alternative was to support the government. An editorial in the Gazette affirmed that "We hold it to be the duty of every citizen to sustain the government under whose protection he lives, against all attacks from whatever quarter, and to uphold it in all and any defensive measures it may adopt."

In the same issue, however, was printed an editorial from the Detroit Free Press, presumably because Hascall approved of its position. The editor of the Detroit paper made it clear that he believed that Democrats and all conservative men would do their duty in the "present dreadful emergency," yet they could "never forget that the war was the result of causes which they have steadily, persistently, and untiringly protested against." He also said that the Democrats had done their best to prevent the triumph of a sectional party, but to no avail. ⁸

Great excitement prevailed in Kalamazoo after the fall of Sumter and Lincoln's call of 75,000 troops. On April 15 a number of men met in the office of J. W. Breese to consider the "late

exciting news from the South." At this meeting Breese was appointed president and S. E. Walbridge, secretary, and the group present voted that the chair appoint a committee of ten to issue a call for a public meeting to be held at Firemen's Hall on the 16th. Among the ten men selected for this committee were Israel Kellogg, Latham Hull, F. W. Curtenius, H. G. Wells, and Dwight May, all prominent citizens and stalwart Democrats and Republicans.

The meeting at Firemen's Hall was called to order by H. G. Wells and Charles E. Stuart was elected president. Several men made eloquent speeches, which were frequently and enthusiastically applauded. A committee was appointed to draw up a set of resolutions. ^{These} ~~its resolutions~~ condemned the insurrection in the South, strongly supported the Federal Government, and were unanimously approved.⁹

Patriotism was now the predominating spirit and red, white and blue, the favorite colors in Kalamazoo. Flags were flying from public buildings, hotels, stores and many private residences. An eloquent symbol of the unity that prevailed in the village during the early weeks and months of the Civil War was the flag that was suspended between the Gazette and Telegraph buildings. Large numbers of people gathered about the recruiting offices and it was said that three companies of volunteers would be raised¹⁰ quickly.

The memorial service conducted shortly after the untimely death of Stephen A. Douglass was another indication of the unity prevalent in Kalamazoo at this time. H. G. Wells moved that the public schools be closed on Thursday, June 6, in order that the teachers and pupils would have the opportunity to be present and participate in the memorial exercises. Businessmen were also urged

to close their shops and stores.¹¹

The first volunteers from Kalamazoo left for Detroit on the morning of April. The morning was clear and beautiful as over two hundred young men gathered in front of Firemen's Hall, and the streets near the hall were filled with people. Then the volunteers marched down North Burdick to the railway station, preceded by a band and followed by a large crowd. At the station speeches were made by the Hon. Charles E. Stuart, Gen. F. W. Curtinius, the Rev. Edward Taylor and Judge H. G. Wells, "all eloquent and appropriate."¹²

Both the Gazette and the Telegraph give poignant accounts of the departure of the young men for the fields of war. As the train pulled out of the station there were shout after shout, the roar of artillery, the swinging of hats and the waving of handkerchiefs.

Recruiting continued after the departure of the first volunteers until the end of the war. For about a year and a half after the beginning of the war, volunteers were sufficient to meet the demands of the Army, but after that it was necessary to resort to the draft. The first draft for Kalamazoo was ordered for the fall of 1862, but enough volunteers were found to fill the quota. The first draft was actually held on October 27, 1863, but few of those chosen could be held; a year later the Telegraph censured the village for being seven delinquent on the draft.¹³

Kalamazoo County furnished 3,221 men for the Union forces and of this total the village of Kalamazoo supplied over a thousand, a remarkable number, considering that its population was less than 10,000. The total casualties for the county from all causes was 389, the majority of them the result of disease and infection.¹⁴

Kalamazoo's support of the war was good. Throughout the conflict sanitary fairs were a frequent occurrence. In 1861 the Ladies' Society of the Soldiers' Aid Society was organized and raised over \$5,000 for the aid and relief of the soldiers. The Gazette printed numerous appeals for blankets and mittens for the Michigan volunteers.

Like every other village and city in the nation, Kalamazoo was very much aware of the war. The Gazette observed that the streets of the village were constantly resounding to the measured tread of newly enlisted soldiers and that "everything seems to wear the dreary aspect of war," and that Kalamazoo appeared "like the towns of the military powers." ¹⁶

Though the sympathies of the Gazette definitely were not with the Republicans, its treatment of the Civil War and its attitude toward the policies of the Lincoln administration were generally constructive and sympathetic. How its treatment of the war differed from that of the Republican Telegraph is not known, because very few of the latter's war issues are extant. Indeed, the newspaper accounts of the crucial years of the Civil War are very scanty, even the Gazette for the years 1863-1865 is not available.

The great endeavor of the Telegraph in the fall of 1864 was the election of the Union ticket. The question before the people, the paper emphasized, was not a matter of party, but "shall the Union and Constitution be preserved, or shall the blessings of Liberty and Free Government be done away with." ¹⁷

In one of its issues ~~of the~~ Telegraph is printed the story of Orestes A. Brownson, who had vehemently opposed Lincoln but now declared that the choice between Baltimore (Gen. George B. McClellan) and Chicago (President Lincoln) was virtually a choice between

Union and Disunion. For this reason, Brownson declared, he was now supporting the Chicago Convention and Lincoln. "I cannot," he said, "vote the peace ticket, for this war has cost me too much for me to be willing it should end till Rebellion is put down and the authority and majesty of the Government vindicated." Undoubtedly many other war-weary Americans felt the same way.¹⁸

A few days before the election, a great mass meeting was scheduled in Firemen's Hall. Due to a terrible snowstorm, the meeting was not as well attended as its sponsors had hoped, but nevertheless, the hall was literally jammed when the hour for the speaking arrived, so that the speaker barely had room to stand.

Part of the program was an example of the gallow's humor that was highly appreciated by many--an exhibition put on by the Portage boys. In the first scene President Lincoln was shown seated at a desk, signing Jeff Davis' death warrant. Davis stands by with a hemp around his neck. The executioner already had the rope adjusted over a pulley and he was shown waiting for the arch traitor to give his final advice to his protege and friend, Little Mac (General McClellan).

Another scene showed Lincoln telling Davis, "I, Abraham Lincoln must do my duty. Jeff, justice demands your execution." In the last scene Jefferson Davis tells Little Mac, "Mac, that Peace Platform will not save us. I am gone. Take care of yourself. Abe will do his duty." Then the executioner pulled the rope.¹⁹

It is regrettable that neither the Gazette nor the Telegraph is available for the stirring and tragic days that saw the end of the Civil War and the assassination of Abraham Lincoln.

During the Reconstruction era, the sympathy of the people of Kalamazoo seems to have been with the Radical Republicans. This

is made clear by the open dislike and hostility that greeted President Andrew Johnson when he was in Kalamazoo on September 5, 1866, even though he was accompanied by the great war heroes, Gen. U. S. Grant and Adm. David G. Farragut.²⁰

The defeated South was accorded scant sympathy, but some money was collected to relieve conditions there. A meeting was held on May 13, 1867, for the purpose of raising funds and providing means for supplying food to the needy Southerners. At this meeting the chairman, N. A. Balch, spoke eloquently on the wretched, piteous condition of the starving people of the South. A number of prominent men, both Democrats and Republicans, were appointed to canvass Kalamazoo County on behalf of the Southern Relief Society of Kalamazoo.²¹

III

Threat of war and actual war itself did not stop the growth and progress of Kalamazoo. While the nation was on the verge of civil war, the citizens of the village were holding meetings in which the revision of the village charter was discussed, or, preferably, the securing of a city charter. But the State Legislature was unsympathetic and Kalamazoo had to wait for twenty more years before it was granted city status.*

Although Kalamazoo had a population of nearly 9,000 in 1860, it still had many of the aspects of a country village. The Gazette complained frequently and bitterly about the dogs and other animals that were infesting its streets. In May 1861 the paper objected

* Although the citizens of Kalamazoo resented the reluctance of the Legislature to grant their village a city charter, they probably were gratified when the name of Kalamazoo received national recognition. One of the first ironclads to be built for the U.S. Navy was the 6,000 ton Kalamazoo. It was of the Monitor class, with double turrets and sides twenty inches thick. The Kalamazoo was nearing completion in 1865 and was described by the Telegraph in 1867.²²

strenuously to the grazing of animals within the boundaries of the Corporation without compensation and complained that the people of the village were having their "premises devastated from time to time by these marauding, though useful animals." Evidently the five ordinances adopted by the Board of Trustees on May 13, prohibiting the running at large of swine, horses, asses, mules, fowl, dogs and cattle had not yet become effective.

The following months brought no noticeable improvement in the situation, if the Gazette is to be believed. In July the paper observed that "If dogs increase as fast as cows, in our streets, we shall be moving into the country during hot weather," and that "People who have been to any expense in procuring muzzles for their dogs, have parted with their money foolishly. Dogs are having the freedom of the city; don't curtail their enjoyment."

But there were evidences of progress. The houses of ill fame were being cleaned out, though they like the dogs would be around for years. The Park got a handsome new fence, Main Street was graveled from Burdick to Portage, and the planting of elm trees was especially encouraged. In the summer of 1866, the work of paving Main and Burdick was completed at a cost of nearly \$40,000, and a fourteen foot sidewalk was laid from the depot to Main Street.

Although building construction was sharply curtailed during the war, a few buildings were erected. In 1861 the Kalamazoo House was rebuilt in brick, the old building being moved to Spring Street, just off Portage, where it stood for many more years. After the war the Court House was remodeled and improved at a cost of \$8,000. The old wooden stores between Burdick and the Kalamazoo House were sold and moved to lots on Lovell Street; in their place was erected "a new and splendid block" for Cobb & Fisher and Bassett & Bates.²³

Kalamazoo was now expanding to the north. Early in 1867 the estate of S. P. Cobb, which had been held off the market for fifteen years, was offered for sale. This property consisted of 150 good building lots north of the Michigan Central Railroad, with large frontage on Rose and Burdick Streets. Another indication of Kalamazoo's expansion to the north was the opening of Douglas Avenue in May of the same year. And business began to expand into the area west of Rose Street, to the block opposite the Court House, which with one or two exceptions had been a residential area.

By this time people had had enough of the poor facilities of Firemen's Hall. Sometime during 1866 or 1867, Union Hall, on the corner of Main and Portage, was erected. It was used for a public hall and many stores and businesses were located in it. This building is today known as the Michigan Building and is part of the Gilmore Enterprises.

The construction of a village hall was one of the important accomplishments of the latter years of the decade. Until its construction, the village government had had no permanent quarters. In the early years of the village, the County Court House provided whatever space was needed, and when the time came that the Court House no longer had room for the village offices, its officials apparently rented space in some of the commercial buildings of the village.²⁴

Early in 1867 it became evident that the building being used by the fire company was in a bad condition and the village trustees planned the erection of a new building. The old building was removed and the new one completed sometime in the fall of the year at a cost of \$14,500. It was dedicated on October 29. The new structure was known as Corporation Hall, "Quick to Rescue Hall," and finally simply as Old City Hall; it was used for municipal

purposes until 1924. The building stood on land that the State of Michigan deeded to the President and Trustees of the Village of Kalamazoo on February 5, 1853, and it still stands at 154 South Burdick.*²⁵

In December of 1867, an industry that Volney Hascall had been promoting for twenty years came into existence when the Kalamazoo Paper Company began operations. The company used large quantities of straw in its paper-making processes. The following twenty years were to see a great expansion in the paper industry.²⁶

Methods of doing business were changing; for many years credit, barter and several prices had been the practices in retail stores. The popular dry goods store of Davis & Bates adopted the policy of cash down and one price in 1862 and many of the other stores followed its lead. Although most of the businesses and commercial enterprises prospered during the period, there were some bad moments. Early in July 1861, the well-known banking house of D. A. McNair was forced to suspend operations, working a hardship on many of its patrons. Two years later, however, a banking firm was founded that for over a century has survived political and economic crises. This was the Michigan National Bank, organized under the leadership of Latham Hull. For over a hundred years this bank, the name was later changed to the First National Bank, has stood on the southeast corner of Michigan and Burdick, or two or three doors east of the corner.²⁷

The newspapers of Kalamazoo continued to be an important factor in the life of the village, but they were having their difficulties. In May 1861 ill health forced Volney Hascall to leave

* Although it has a modern front and interior, the sides, back and foundations of the building reveal its age. The foundations of buildings like Corporation Hall, the Humphrey and Sweetland Blocks and Union Hall are interesting to examine. They are not concrete or masonry, but cobble stones, as much as thirty inches deep.

the management of the Gazette in other hands, while he and his wife toured Europe, hoping that the sea voyage and travel in Europe would prove beneficial to him. While there he wrote letters to the Gazette which give an interesting and informative picture of Europe as it appeared to an American observer. Travel, however, did not achieve the desired results and on September 26, 1862, Hascall's twenty-five connection with the Gazette came to an end. The Kalamazoo Telegraph too was having its problems. In July 1861 it was sold at public auction for \$575 and was bought by a Dr. Fitch, who had recently come from California. A few months later George A. Fitch went back to Telegraph, hoping that he could publish a daily soon. As far as can be determined today, the first issue of the Evening Telegraph was published on Thursday, September 29, 1864, but it was discontinued after a few months.²⁸

IV

The exigencies and anxieties of the Civil War were not conducive to social and cultural activities, yet games, circuses and concerts continued to amuse and relax people.

The first game of "Base Ball" seems to have been played between Kalamazoo and Schoolcraft in June 1860. The first game lasted thirty innings, the second, seventeen, and the third game was nearly broken up by the interference of outsiders with the "judge." The game probably continued to be played during the war years, but little or no mention was made of it. But after the war baseball became a great sport--Kalamazoo having a number of teams-- and games were of frequent occurrence.²⁹

Shortly after the fall of Fort Sumter, the first Philharmonic concert was held at Firemen's Hall. Professional groups and organizations like Dan Rice's Great Show, which appeared in Kalamazoo

on September 28, 1864, continued to provide entertainment for the people. Rice's show consisted of trained horses, monkeys, dogs and mules, and it was a "moral exhibition"--everything improper and worthless had been expurgated. The advertisement went on to say that Mrs. Rice would exhibit a trained horse and would show her lady patrons how to secure obedience and affection--hopefully, the Tele-graph suggested, this might prove to be a lesson for truant husbands.³⁰

During the fall, winter and early spring months, especially after the close of the war, the Ladies' and Young Men's Library Associations provided more genteel entertainment. These two organizations united in securing a course of lectures for the season. Well-known persons like Clara Barton and Wendell Phillips appeared in Kalamazoo at Union Hall. Phillips addressed his audience on "The Perils of the Times," and although this was late in the season, a large crowd gathered to hear him.³¹

It was during the post-war period that an organization was founded that for over a century has made important contributions to the lives of the young men of Kalamazoo. On May 17, 1867, a meeting was held for the purpose of getting an expression from the young men as to the feasibility of organizing a Young Men's Christian Association. Evidently the response was favorable, for three weeks later its organization was effected and shortly thereafter officers were elected.

The YMCA soon established a reading room on the second floor of Brown's Block, which was just one door south of Corporation Hall. But for nearly twenty years, the association itself had its headquarters at 111 Main, a few doors east of the southeast corner of Michigan and Burdick.³²

Chapter 6
THE LIBRARY OF SCHOOL DISTRICT NO. 1 AND OTHER LIBRARIES
1860-1872

I.

In 1859 the Michigan Legislature, as has already been mentioned, asked the qualified voters of a township to vote whether they would continue a township library or return to a school district system. With this authorization, the voters of Kalamazoo township voted in April of that year that the books belonging to the Township Library should be apportioned among the different school districts. On February 10, 1860, the Township Board of School Inspectors met to divide the books belonging to the Township Library. There were 188 volumes in the library, of which School District No. 1 received 123.¹

Shortly after this D. S. Walbridge gave the district library twenty-four volumes of Michigan documents. These documents, plus the 123 volumes from the Township Library, formed the nucleus of the present Kalamazoo Library System.

Although the early records agree on 147 books, the first accession book of the school district library lists 154 volumes that were acquired from the township library and D. S. Walbridge. The first book listed is volume 1 of Bancroft's History of the United

States. As one looks over the list of these books, it would seem that only a few of them would be suitable for a school library. And the Michigan documents, which consisted largely of Patent Office reports, Transactions of the Michigan State Agricultural Society, and State documents, were even less suitable.

Sometime between February 10 and March 9, 1860, the Board of Education took possession of the books allotted to the school district and probably moved its office and the books into a room over the flour store of S. E. Walbridge in the Sweetland Block.

The Sweetland Block was built in 1858 by Caleb Sweetland, Sheldon and Mowrer. It was erected on the site of Walbridge's earlier flour store which had been destroyed by fire in 1857. The Bell Shoe Store has for many years occupied the building that was known for so long as the Sweetland Block. The building stands near the southwest corner of East Michigan and Portage.

At the meeting of the Board of Education in late February, Frank Little, a member of the Board and its secretary, was asked to present a set of rules for the management of the school district library. At the March 9 meeting, Little read the rules which he had prepared and which, on the motion of H. G. Wells, treasurer of the Board, were adopted. These first "Rules and Regulations of School District Library, District No. 1, Kalamazoo" are indeed an ambitious and comprehensive set of rules for a library of barely 150 volumes.

1st. That all the Books belonging to this District and that may hereafter be acquired, shall be cataloged, valued and numbered.

2d. The Library shall be opened for distribution Saturdays in each week, at the hours of 3 and 4 P.M.

3d. Books can only be drawn by the parents or guardians, with vouchers if required, of children of proper age belonging to this District or upon written request. They shall also be respectively liable to pay any injury to or loss of, or neglect to return any book obtained from the Library, to be sued in

the name of the Dist., for the use and benefit thereof.

4th. Only one book can be drawn and be out at a time for one family, and the same cannot be redrawn if any other person wishes to take it. Books shall not be retained over two weeks, and no person shall be allowed to draw books from the Library while keeping any book that should be returned, or who are liable for any fine or charges which are unpaid.

5th. No person shall loan a Library Book under penalty of ten (10) cents. Any one keeping a book from the Library more than two weeks shall pay a fine of not less than five cents, nor more than the value of the book and twenty-five (25) cents, to be fixed by the Librarian.

6th. The Librarian shall report to the District Board quarterly the amount of fines assessed and collected, and all sums accruing from this source shall be expended in the purchase of books; he shall also report annually before the last Monday in September, to the Dist. Board, who shall report the same to the Annual Meeting, the number and condition of the books in the Library and the number drawn during the year. ²

As these regulations indicate, this library was not a public library, but one strictly for the use of school children, parents, and/or guardians. Considering the fact that most of these books had been the township library for nearly fifteen years, one would be justified in saying that it was very unlikely that those interested in reading would turn to the books in the School District Library.

That there was some interest in a good public library, sponsored by the Board of Education, is indicated by a statement found in the annual report of the Ladies' Library Association:

Libraries have become a very general means for the diffusion of useful knowledge, peculiar to our age. In older places Boards of education have provided large and valuable libraries to their citizens... ³

On June 1 the public of the school district was notified that the Library Room was open every Saturday afternoon at the hours of 3 and 4, and that the Library was free to all residents of the District who had pupils "in charge." In this notice it was also stated that a large number of books would be purchased soon with funds voted for library purposes at the last township meeting; District No. 1's share of these funds was about \$200, which would

buy between 150 and 175 volumes.⁴

About three months later, the "Librarian of School District No. 1," Little had been formally appointed to this position at the September Board meeting, informed the people "that there has been a large and valuable collection of new and popular books added to the Library kept in Sweetland's Block." It is not known how many books were added at this time, but a later report shows that 175 books were added to the collection between September 3 and 6, 1861. This report further noted that 1,422 books had been borrowed and that ten were lost.⁵

Librarians and boards in those early days were greatly concerned over the loss of books. Perhaps the Board felt that fewer books would be lost if fines on overdue books were reduced; for in February 1861 it reduced fines from five to two cents a day.⁶

One serious problem that the new library faced was the reluctance with which funds voted for library purposes were released. In February 1861 the Gazette reported that the amount of money in the hands of the county treasurer, collected from penal fines and forfeited recognizances, was not known, because the money for library purposes had never been divided among the several townships of the county, but that it was assumed the amount was large. A year and a half later \$314.08 was due the school district from the township treasurer.⁷

However, on May 24, 1861, an apportionment of school library funds was made in the office of the township clerk to the school districts in the township. These funds totaled \$383.40, of which amount School District No. 1, with 1,668 pupils, was allotted \$314.08. Besides the receipts from penal fines, the Library was also allocated money from the dog tax, which in 1866 amounted to

\$322.14. For nearly thirty years the school library received part of its support from this tax; evidently the dogs against which the Gazette inveighed so frequently and caustically were of some value.⁸

Although some funds were released, not many books were purchased during the first five years. There were only 376 volumes in the library on August 31, 1863; about a year later sixty more books were bought, so that by September 1, 1865, the total number of books was 425. Not until after the end of the Civil War were any important acquisitions made to the library. During the year 1868, 1,036 books were purchased at a total cost of \$1,580.57; these acquisitions brought the holdings of the library to 1,416. As the number of books ^{increased} ~~in the library increased~~, the circulation also ^{grew} ~~increased~~. Only 1,569 books were loaned in 1863, but by 1868 the total circulation had grown to 3,259 and in 1869 to 7,585.⁹

Although Frank Little was not a librarian (There were no trained librarians in those days.), he apparently knew books and was interested in securing suitable books for the school children. Not only did he buy many serious history, science and moral works, but he also bought the kind of book that would do for recreational reading. The old accession books shows that he did not forget the small or young child. Many of the books that he bought, such as the works of Sir Walter Scott, Nathaniel Hawthorne and Louisa May Alcott, are the classics of our day. But he also bought titles like The Drunkard's Daughter, The Swiss Family Robinson, The Green Mountain Boys and Ten Nights in a Bar Room. He purchased his books from local bookstores, Chicago booksellers, and he also went to Detroit to buy books. The result of his endeavors, as indicated by the old accession records, was that the District School Library

was a very respectable one for its day.

A little evidence has survived to our day which shows that the children of the 1860's appreciated the Library. One of them liked to recall in his later years how he with a dozen or so other school boys used to gather on Saturday afternoons and watch for Mr. Little's tall, dignified figure and then they would clatter upstairs after him, caps in hand, waiting for the door to be unlocked, and then pressing to the counter, eagerly hoping that they might receive one of the much loved Oliver Optics, or one of the few, but equally popular books on African travel or Australian gold digging. Another recalled that in her childhood, since she could have but one book a week, she would read in careful installments, so that it would last till Saturday came around again.

And Mrs. J. A. Kent, Little's successor, said that when she was getting ready to catalog the books in the library, she found about three hundred volumes, nearly all "Juveniles," so soiled and tattered by eager little hands that it was decided that they must be discarded. While the books lay heaped on the floor awaiting removal, George Bates, one of the well-known boys of the town, rushed in and begged that he be allowed to buy two or three of his old favorites, rather than to see them destroyed.¹⁰

For nearly a decade the Library had no permanent location. Less than a year after moving into the Sweetland Block, the Board of Education ^{evidently} moved its office and the Library into a room on the third floor of W. A. Tomlinson's Store; for on March 4, 1862, the Committee on Buildings reported to the Board that it had leased this room for the use of the Board and Library for \$250 a year.¹¹

The Board may also have occupied one or two other locations before moving into Corporation Hall in 1867. Two elderly ladies

recalled many years later that the Library was at one time housed in the John W. Taylor building, which in 1860 stood on Main Street across from the Burdick Hotel. Another lady remembered when the Library was using one small room on the second floor of the A. C. Wortley jewelry store on the southeast corner of Main ~~and Main~~ and Burdick, and an early history of the District School Library states that it was located for a while in a small upper room on the corner of Main and Burdick. This could have been either the Tomlinson or the Wortley building.¹²

A month or so after the completion of Corporation Hall, the village trustees gave the Board of Education permission to move its office and the Library into the building. At the Board meeting held on December 3, "Sec'y Little was authorized to remove the office of the Board into the New Corporation Engine House, W side of Burdick St." Little noted after his report of the meeting, "Moved the office on Wednesday 4th 1867 into the new building as above."¹³

It is not clear how much room the Library had in its new quarters. One history speaks of a small, poorly ventilated room; another mentions the Library and the free reading room; and a third account states that the Library was first located at the back of Corporation Hall and later removed to the north side front. Nor is it clear whether the Board office and the Library shared one room, or whether there were two rooms. But whatever the facts may be, it can be said with certainty that ^{it} ~~the Library~~ did not occupy pretentious or even adequate quarters.¹⁴

On May 4, 1869, Frank Little presented his second set of rules for the Library Room to the Board. These rules are interesting, for they reveal clearly the philosophy of library service that prevailed a hundred years ago. These rules, four in number, enjoined

the users of the Library

- I. To enter the room quietly in an orderly manner without pushing, crowding, or unnecessary noise and confusion.
- II. To observe a proper Deportment while in the room, not to converse, move about needlessly or do anything that may disturb the Librarian in the discharge of his duties.
- III. To attend to the business of Exchanging Books as soon as may be after entering and having accomplished the same to immediately retire from the room.
- IV. Any one not observing properly the foregoing rules and Regulations will be debarred the privileges of the Library at the discretion of the Librarian.¹⁵

Perhaps these rules also indicate that the children who were using the Library no longer had the awe and respect for it that they originally had had and were beginning to relax and conduct themselves as children usually have done.

During these early years of the Library, both it and the school district were fortunate in the men who were chosen to be members of the Board of Education. The members and officers of the first Board have already been cited. In 1867 the ~~Board~~ members were Henry E. Hoyt, who served on that body for twenty-eight years and was its secretary for eighteen, Allen Potter, a pioneer in the bog iron industry, Thomas S. Cobb, J. M. Edwards, the president, Curtis W. Hall, treasurer, and Frank Little, secretary and librarian, for which services he was paid a hundred dollars a year. These men again were some of the most prominent and capable in the village.

II

Besides the School District Library, there were four other libraries in Kalamazoo. The library of the Ladies' Library Association was probably the largest in the village and certainly the most respected. Sometime before the Board of Education was given permission to move into Corporation Hall, the trustees of the village, in recognition of the important contributions that the Association had made to the cultural life of the community, "generously voted to the Ladies' Library Association, the use of the south

room in the new Corporation Hall." In return for this consideration the members of the Board of Trustees were offered the free use of the library of the Association.¹⁶

In 1862 the holdings of this library totaled 926 volumes, but the circulation for the year was just a little over 1,500. Some of the titles added during the year were fifteen volumes of Spark's American Biographies, Half Hours with the Best Authors, Recreation of a Country Pastor, Life of Garibaldi, Life's Evenings, and Smiles' Self-Help. Eight years later the library contained about 2,000 volumes.¹⁷

Another important library in Kalamazoo was that of the Young Men's Association; this ^{one} ~~library~~ was also moved to Corporation Hall, so that all three of Kalamazoo's non-academic libraries were housed in the same building. The holdings of this library seem to have been comparable to those of the Ladies' Association Library.

By this time Kalamazoo College had built up a fairly respectable library. In 1868 the "gentlemen's library" of the College reportedly comprised about 2,000 volumes and that of the Female College somewhat less. It is doubtful that these two libraries were that large.¹⁸

III

Kalamazoo was not the only community in Michigan that was beginning to see the need for more and better libraries, though there was still no concerted movement in their behalf. It was during the 1860's that the largest public library in the State got under way. In 1842 the Michigan Legislature had passed an act making the city of Detroit one school district and stipulating that the school board should establish a library, but the efforts of the Board to secure "the clear proceeds of penal fines," as provided

by the State Constitution, were long futile. But in 1860 the Detroit Board of Education appointed a strong library committee, which evidently took firm action in the matter of penal fines; for a test case in the same year resulted in the following opinion being handed down by Judge James V. Campbell:

No deduction for expenses or otherwise can lawfully be made from such fines. The clear proceeds, therefore, as the law now stands, include all sums paid into the treasury from the sources mentioned.

The Civil War, however, delayed effective action by the library committee.

Although the Detroit Public Library was dedicated on March 25, 1865, it was not opened to the public until May 2, because the book catalog was not completed until the end of April. About a hundred citizens attended the dedication. Since the library was located in the old Capitol building, it was known for years as the Capitol Library.

For several years the patronage of the Detroit Public Library was disappointing, even though the people of Detroit had waited for a public library for many years. Out of a population of 55,000, only 475 persons borrowed books between May 2 and the end of the first year, and only 4,700 books were borrowed. Three years later nearly 2,500 persons were entitled to borrow books and the total circulation exceeded 35,000. ¹⁹

The Bay City Library was another library that had its genesis during this decade--a library that was definitely the result of popular initiative and support. A group of young men in Bay City organized a strong library association. So generous and quick was the response of the citizens of the community to the association that before the end of the year 2,000 books had been purchased. The sheriff's office served as the library. In 1870

only the Detroit Public Library exceeded the holdings of the Bay City Library and the Ladies' Library Association of Kalamazoo with its 2,000 volumes exactly equalled it. Today the Bay City Library has over 80,000 volumes and a circulation of 325,000 or better...

During the early years of this library, the circulation was recorded in a large book with a separate page for each person, on which were listed the books borrowed, so that even today a Bay Cityan can learn what his ancestors were reading in the sixties and seventies.

The Plainwell Public Library is another library that owes its existence to a library association. The early settlers of Plainwell brought with them from New England a desire for the reading privileges they had left behind. They read and re-read their books until Mrs. Henry J. Cushman called the ladies together and proposed that each bring what books they owned and leave them in a convenient place for the enjoyment and improvement of all. This resulted in her offering a room in her home for this service and Mrs. Cushman herself acted as the librarian. When the books that had been collected were read, another meeting was called, which resulted in the forming of a Ladies' Library Association in 1868.

Many years later--in 1917, Mrs. Charles A. Ranson bequeathed to the village her home with its beautiful grounds on the banks of the Kalamazoo River. This bequest was for library purposes and was wisely conditioned upon assured financial support. The Ladies' Library Association then gladly merged its interests and books and, fifty years after its organization, became part of the public library.²⁰

Although all of the libraries in Michigan were small--the Detroit Public Library possessed less than 10,000 volumes, the foundations for library service had been laid and the following twenty-

five years would be marked by an increase in the number of libraries, a healthy growth in their holdings and, above all, the development of new concepts of library service.

IV

The establishment and growth of the school district library was the outstanding development in Kalamazoo's educational system during this period. With the completion of Union School and the consolidation of the school districts, public education was in the best condition it had ever been, although there was still much room for improvement. Many of the children were not in regular attendance at school; it was reported in June 1861 that the attendance at Union School was 585 and 254 at the ward schools. If the figure of 2,377 children between the ages of five and twenty is correct for 1866, then it must be concluded that in Kalamazoo there were at least several hundred children who were not in school regularly.²¹

About the only physical improvement made in the school plant was the fencing of three sides of the Union School lot. In the expansion of the curriculum, however, progress continued to be made under the leadership of Daniel Putnam, the superintendent of schools. And as early as 1859/60 there must have been a library in the high school, which was part of Union School; for in the school catalogue for this year is found the statement that "He (the superintendent of schools) shall have the custody and management of the 'Kalamazoo High School Library,' and see to the preservation and proper use of the same." Two years later the school catalogue noted that "There is a well selected Library connected with the High School, and an excellent Philosophical and Chemical apparatus."²²

Education in Kalamazoo was still small business: at the

annual school meeting held on September 2, 1861, it was reported that the total expenditures and cash for the preceding year amounted to \$15,077.69, of which \$2,607.14 was cash. (During the same period the village corporation spent \$5,000.) There seems to have been but little interest in school problems and affairs, since only forty-eight men voted at this school meeting.

One action taken at this meeting indicates that Kalamazoo was not free from racial prejudice. This action provided that a separate school for the colored children should be established and that these children should be immediately excluded from the schools attended by white children. Three hundred dollars were raised to pay the salary for a teacher and two months later a teacher was hired at a salary of seven dollars a week. Although this seems low, it must have been near the average wage, for a year later the Board of Education voted to hire a janitor at a wage not to exceed five dollars a week.* ²³

V

Kalamazoo College, Kalamazoo's only school of higher education, seemed to be ill-starred during the 1860's. Until the beginning of the Civil War, the college was showing consistent growth, even though this growth never had a solid financial foundation. The thirty years following the beginning of the war was a period of great crisis for the institution. The fact that between sixty-eight and a hundred students enlisted in the Army during the conflict, of whom seventeen died from wounds and disease incurred in battle,

* A meeting held by the colored people in May 1861 provides further proof that the lot of these people was not a happy one. A resolution adopted at this meeting and signed by eleven colored men declared:

"Whereas, we the people of color of these United States of America are cursed by the blighting influence of oppression, as are displayed in the inequality of its laws in depriving us of our legitimate rights politically as well as socially...

"Resolved, That we use our utmost endeavor to encourage immigration to Hayti." ²⁴

was not the chief reason for the beginning of its difficulties.

The resignation of Dr. and Mrs. Stone on November 5, 1863, precipitated an extremely serious crisis in the administration of Kalamazoo College. Most of the faculty resigned and between one twenty and one hundred fifty students asked for and received honorable "dimission."

Although Stone probably was a poor financier, this does not appear to be the real reason for his resignation. For one thing, many Baptists objected to the educational policies of the Stones. Mrs. Stone wrote some years later that her husband had insisted upon an open rather than a purely Baptist corporation for the college. But more serious than these objections were the persistent rumors of immorality that had been raised against Stone, and consequently, he was haled before a church court consisting of members of the First Baptist Church and after a long trial, was adjudged guilty on two counts and denied the hand of fellowship. The trial and its outcome split the Baptist Church and the town into bitter factions and the church lost many of its members and deacons. The evidence upon which Dr. Stone was convicted was very questionable and the fairest verdict that can be made after so many years is "That Dr. Stone was indiscreet but not immoral in his relations with women students is probably the truth of the matter."

The feeling of many in Kalamazoo is illustrated by the statement of one who was solicited to contribute to the college: "No," he said, "I would not give a shilling to save the College from sinking. All there is of that College Dr. Stone made; the College has abused him shamefully."

The facts are that Stone retained the respect and confidence of many, probably the majority, of the community. He later became

editor of the Daily Telegraph, was at one time president of the Michigan Publishers Association, and held the position of postmaster of Kalamazoo during part of Grant's administration.²⁵

And just a few months after his trial, he was one of the speakers for the Union Republican Club. On November 2, 1864, he spoke at Schoolcraft and on the 5th at Climax Corners. It seems unlikely that the Republicans at the end of a hard fought campaign, whose outcome was uncertain, would have asked Stone to speak at Party rallies if his reputation had been seriously tarnished.²⁶

Chapter 7

KALAMAZOO BECOMES A CITY, 1870-1893

I

The twenty-five years following the end of the Civil War was a period of growth and change for the village of Kalamazoo. As the seventies began, its population was slightly more than 10,000; twenty years later it had nearly doubled. This increase in population produced a building boom; in the summer of 1872 it was estimated that more than a hundred and fifty houses would be built, and it was a slow year that didn't^{see} a hundred or more houses completed. Not only were more houses being built, but those under construction were larger and more elaborate. Lawns were becoming popular and common and the ubiquitous plantain was already a nuisance, but a drop of oil in the heart of the weed would take care of it.

The streets of Kalamazoo ~~boasted~~^{boasted} water fountains and it was no longer necessary to use the communal dipper.

As the village grew in population, it also increased in area. In the spring of 1872, it was reported that North Kalamazoo was growing and experiencing much improvement. Less than ten years later the part of town on Wheaton Avenue was filling up and in 1884 Douglas Avenue, after twenty years of agitation by west side residents, was finally opened.¹

The rapid growth of the village, however, was causing some concern that Kalamamzoo would lose the attractiveness of which many were so proud. The editor of the Daily Telegraph suggested that future additions be platted properly. He questioned,

How can the surrounding territory now required by the needs of increasing population and business be so added to the original plat as to preserve the symetry and beauty of our streets? ²

Although still a village, perhaps the largest one in the nation, Kalamazoo was already experiencing the encroachments of civilization on every hand. The attractive groves that had surrounded the town were rapidly disappearing and the burr oaks, which had been the pride of two generations, gave way to broader streets and large buildings. And the beautiful Kalamazoo River had become a "dirty, filthy, malodorous stream," with most of the trees along its banks having been cut down. ³

The wilderness, however, was still near; bear were killed in the vicinity of Kalamamzoo as late as the winter of 1873, but hunting laws indicated the passing of the frontier. The hunting of elk, deer and wild turkey was prohibited from January 1 to September 1 and that of prairie chickens, grouse, pheasants and ducks from August 5 to February 1. Yet game seems to have been plentiful, for five deer was the legal limit as late as 1898. This was also the time that saw the near extermination of the passenger pigeon. In the early '70's great flocks flew over the village and for years the papers carried accounts of its slaughter, ~~of the passenger pigeon.~~ In April 1874, for example, one hundred barrels were shipped east and south in three days and six years later the report was that 18,000 dozen pigeons had been shipped from Traverse City since the opening of the season. ⁴

Kalamazoo continued to be an attractive town--a traveler in 1882 described it as the prettiest village he had seen in this country or an other country: "so green, sunny, shady, and tidy," yet it had its unlovely and seamy aspects. On Saturday evenings, during the warm, dry summer months, the town would be filled with pedestrians and carriages and wagons; then everything seemed wrapped in a film or fog of dust. Dirty water, slops and other refuse from saloons and restaurants on Burdick and Main were still being thrown on the streets and the stench which came up from the gutters was "sickening and terrible."⁵

Animals, especially dogs, continued to be nuisances. When there was nothing better to do, the newspapers railed against the numerous dogs that infested the village and later the city of Kalamazoo. In the spring of 1884, one of the newspaper writers observed that either the dogs or the gardens must go, or else fences had to be restored. As late as June 1890, the Telegraph noted that "Kalamazoo probably has more worthless and ownerless curs and dogs in its streets and does less to keep them in the pound, or to get rid of them, than any other city in the State." Livestock was also a problem; in the spring of 1880, we find the village marshall still warning, as he had done for many years, that cattle must be pastured in enclosures and that all found running loose would be impounded. This problem was especially serious in west Kalamazoo.⁶

Kalamazoo continued to be proud of its park. In the summer of 1876 a petition was circulated asking the village fathers to name it Bronson Park, which the paper said was "a step in the right direction." By 1880 the Park had a fountain and as many as two thousand people would gather on Sundays to watch the gold fish,

grayling and trout in the pool. A few years later the lamp posts in the Park were painted scarlet, which made them "simply hideous" in the eyes of some, not the last time by any means that the lamp posts in Bronson Park were denounced as artistic atrocities. Nor were the citizens who used the park as careful as they might have been to preserve its beauty and attractiveness. The Daily Tele-railed that

It is a beautiful commentary upon the courtesy, love of order, and regard for decency which prevails in this community--the fact that people will disregard their manifest duty in respect to crossing the park.⁷

Ever since the 1860's, the people of Kalamazoo had tried to achieve city status for their village, but not until 1883 did the State Legislature yield to their desires. On June 4 Peyton Ranney, state representative from Kalamazoo, sent a telegram to E. W. De Yoe, president of the village: "The child is born and its name is the city of Kalamamzoo." II

De Yoe responded: "Just home from Chicago. The city of Kalamazoo sends greetings to her representative." 8

Surprisingly, this change in municipal status aroused little comment in either the Gazette or the Telegraph; Kalamazoo had waited so long for this legislative action that it was probably anticlimatic when it finally came. The village government was transferred to that of the city on April 12, 1886.

This change in status was long overdue; for the problems of the growing community were becoming too much for the village government. It must be admitted, though, that the city government also found the problems of juvenile delinquency, rowdiness and prostitution difficult to cope with.

Drunkenness continued to be a perplexing problem, not only in Kalamazoo but also in the State. Twice the State had tried to

curb the liquor traffic by prohibition laws, but these had proved unsuccessful. Then, in July 1871, a new liquor law went into effect; its fundamental principle was that the liquor seller, like all other men, was responsible to the person injured for whatever damages that could be proved, and the rentees of the places where this business was transacted were to be sharers in this responsibility. Evidently this law was also ineffective, for three years the papers reported that some of the ladies of the city, in order to discourage the liquor business, visited the saloons, and, if granted permission to enter, would sing and pray there.⁹

Although drunkenness, rowdiness, juvenile delinquency and crime were common and received much publicity, much benevolent and constructive work was also done. In the fall of 1871, the people of the village organized their efforts to provide relief for the victims of the Chicago fire and for those who were suffering from the forest fires that had devastated Holland, Manistee and many of the counties in northern Michigan. The Salvation Army arrived in 1886 and the following year a movement was begun to organize a humane society that was incorporated and ready for business by 1890.¹⁰

Adequate care of the poor and infirm was a serious lack. The Telegraph wrote in the spring of 1888 that Kalamazoo County treated criminals better than its poor. This bitter accusation must have stung the people of the county into action, for in April 4,039 voted in favor of a new poorhouse to 2,329 against the proposal. The following December the contract was let for the construction of a county poorhouse at a cost of \$19,485.¹¹

III

It was, however, in the development and growth of business

and industry that Kalamazoo achieved spectacular success. In 1875 there were listed among its manufactures a broom handle, two pianos and organs, four planing mills, three pumps, several cigar makers, one washingmachine, three windmills, five harness and saddle and one paper mill. Altogether there were fifty factories, large and small.

Two of the windmill factories were located on Eleanor Street, which was the site of several industrial companies. In 1880 Kalamazoo was shipping windmills to Cape Colony, Africa and four years later it was said that more windmills were produced in Kalamazoo than in any other city; two years later they were being shipped to as many as forty-seven different foreign countries.

The output of some of the other factories was ~~also~~ astonishing. In one day Lawrence and Chapin shipped 175 diamond-iron plows to one firm; one small company made and sold seven hundred wheelbarrows in one season. The Collins Washingmachine Company had a contract with one Chicago firm for 1,200 machines and the Michigan Manufacturing Company made broom handles by the carload. In 1874 Merrill and McCourtie milled nearly 65,000 barrels of flour and expected to produce a hundred thousand barrels in 1876. N. Chase and Company was probably the largest fanning mill factory in the United States; in one ten-day period it shipped eleven carloads of knocked-down mills.

In 1875 Kalamazoo had \$1,400,000 invested in manufacturing concerns that provided employment to nearly nine hundred persons.¹²

Business continued to be brisk during the 1880's, for the demand for its industrial products seemed to be insatiable. In the summer of 1882, the Kalamazoo Carriage works, which was making sixty vehicles a day, was unable to keep up with the demand, and

a velocipede company in the city had more orders than it could fill.¹³

Among the more amusing aspects of Kalamazoo industry were the harrow manufacturers. During the 1880's a great many harrows were invented and patented by Kalamazoo inventors and many were the lawsuits based on the claims of infringement of patents. The papers were filled with the announcements of these suits. In 1884 there were five harrow factories in the city and one of these was reportedly the largest spring tooth harrow interest in the United States.¹⁴

But not every business was prospering. In the spring of 1886 the old, well-established firm of L. & L. Clark and Co. failed, a company that had been doing business in Kalamazoo since late pioneer days. Then in the summer of 1889, the Kalamazoo House, which had been *in operation* since the early 1830's, went into receivership. The hotel had always had an excellent reputation and its closing aroused a great deal of comment.¹⁶

The growing of celery became an important enterprise during the decade of the eighties. Beginning in 1879 with an output of 500,000 bunches by four or five Hollanders, the production of celery increased to 1,400,000 dozen A-grade bunches by 1885. Over a thousand acres were devoted to the growing of celery and hundreds of people were engaged in its cultivation; a few years later 2,400 acres were in celery production and the value of the crop was around a million dollars. By 1891 Kalamazoo was known as Celeryville and it was boasted that it produced most of the world's supply of celery.¹⁷

Kalamazoo's two newspapers continued to boost the advantages of the city and always proudly published the news when a new company, such as Fuller Brothers of Minneapolis or the Wosley Wheel

Company of Sandusky, Ohio, announced its plans for moving to Kalamazoo. And they were also quick to criticize when manufacturers who had thought of transferring their operations to Kalamazoo, moved to Jackson or some other Michigan city.¹⁸

A group of businessmen discussed the problem of losing industries to other communities and decided that Kalamazoo was being held back by too many over-conservative capitalists who pinched their dollars with unusual closeness, yet expected others to go ahead and promote the city, while they profited from the general prosperity which had cost them nothing. In February 1882 a group of the leading citizens of Kalamazoo organized the Kalamazoo Improvement Company, the object of which was to publicize the advantages of the city as a manufacturing center, and to assist and encourage manufacturers and mechanics to locate here, and to aid the industries that would be an asset to the community. Seven years later the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce was organized.¹⁹

IV ~~III~~

Although it seems hard to comprehend today, much of the economy of the period was horse-powered and teams and wagons were big business. On one Saturday in December 1880, ninety-six teams passed Court House square in fifteen minutes, and a woman living in the north part of town counted 382 teams passing her house on the Cooper Road in one day. One hundred and twenty of these teams were drawing wood. Many made their living from caring for these horses. In the summer of 1883, one hundred forty horse sheds were erected on the land now occupied by Gilmore's parking facility. These sheds were large enough to shelter both horses and carriages without unhitching and there was also a comfortable waiting room where families could rest and eat their lunches. Undoubtedly many a farm family, especially the mother and children, appreciated

these accommodations. These sheds, which were also known as the Horse Hotel or Farmers' Sheds, were popular; on one day 340 rigs used them and the fee was ten cents a shed.²⁰

The labor picture began to change during this period. Even though manpower was a very essential factor in the economy, wages were generally low, but the working man seldom complained over wages and working conditions. During the 1880's masons were paid three dollars a day and carpenters, \$2.50 and these wages were high compared with those paid to the 589 men employed by the Kalamazoo iron works and the agricultural implement industries in 1890. These workers were paid \$9.79 a week for married men and \$7.55 for single men. Usually the only bonus given them was a Christmas turkey.²¹

By 1885 labor was no longer satisfied to accept what the employers considered to be adequate wages. The spring and summer of 1886 was notable for labor disturbances throughout the nation, but Kalamazoo escaped until late June. Then on June 30, the Telegraph reported somewhat triumphantly that Kalamazoo too had a real, genuine strike; sixteen men had walked out of Smith's cooper shop because their wages had been cut from nine cents to eight cents a barrel. This strike, however, was soon settled by arbitration and the old rate ~~was~~ restored.²²

During the 1880's there was a great demand for female help; in fact there seems to have been a scarcity of competent help. The modern female secretary or clerk, who was proficient at the typewriter, was beginning to make her appearance. W. G. Dewing & Sons were among the first to use a typewriter in their office and a few years later Western Union also installed one.²³

Judged by modern standards, prices were very low then, but when compared with the wages and salaries that were paid, they may

have been as high as prices are today. In 1893 calico cost four to six cents a yard, kerosene, ten cents a gallon, coffee, thirty cents a pound, eggs, fifteen cents a dozen, wheat was worth fifty-five to sixty cents a bushel and corn, forty cents. A few years earlier ladies' extra fine scarlet underwear had sold for \$1.25 and extra heavy, thirty-five cents.²⁴

Business practices were at times unconventional, to say the least. One Saturday afternoon a clothing war broke out. H. Stern & Co. had hired a four-horse chariot and a number of singers and had assembled them in front of their store. Soon a large crowd gathered. Then someone began to throw collars, cuffs, socks and handkerchiefs from the top of Kahn and Hecht's store and the crowd rushed there. Whereupon Stern's retaliated by sending down showers of clothing, including overcoats.²⁵

Although most of the people in Kalamazoo were poor or middle-class, there were fifty men in 1884 who reportedly were worth \$100,000 or more. Col. Frank B. Stockbridge, who had made at least part of his fortune in the lumber business, was the wealthiest, being worth, so it was estimated, between a million and two million dollars. J. B. Woodbury was supposedly worth between a half a million and H. M. Peck, a quarter of a million.²⁶

V IV

It was during the 1880's that Kalamazoo's most famous industry, the Upjohn Company, was founded. The Upjohns had been a prominent family in Kalamazoo County since 1835, when Dr. Uriah Upjohn came to Ross Township. In 1871 he moved to Kalamazoo and with his son Dr. Henry U. Upjohn opened an office on Main Street. Two years later they were joined by Dr. Helen M. Upjohn. In 1876 Uriah Upjohn decided to move back to Gull Prairie, which had been his home for

many years, and bought a 160-acre farm, where he lived until his death in 1896.²⁷

H. U. Upjohn was a man of versatile interests and talents. In 1874 he began to manufacture food cutters, the largest one of them selling for twelve dollars; eight years later he built a "pretentious" block on South Burdick. This block had sixty-five rooms, besides the stores, and cost \$18,000. It is presently occupied by the Woolworth store. Upon completion of the building, he began experimenting with the use of peat from his marsh in its furnace; it reportedly burned with complete success.²⁸

But greater achievements were in future for the Upjohns. Sometime in the early 1880's, Dr. William Upjohn of Hastings, the brother of H. U., developed a process for making pills that would give better satisfaction to the medical profession than the insoluble and practically indestructible ones that were commonly used. In February 1885 he and his brother organized the Upjohn Pill and Granule Company. The company was first located in the Upjohn Block--basement and second floor, and a year later its usual day's work was a hundred thousand pills, but it could make as many as 150,000.

The Telegraph predicted that this was

an enterprise that bids fair to grow to great proportions. But few persons know that we have in our midst a factory and growing industry, which may do as much as some of our most important manufactories to carry the name of Kalamazoo to remote corners of the earth.²⁹

The Upjohn Company grew rapidly. In 1886 a laboratory was built in the rear of the Upjohn Block and two years later it became necessary to erect a three-story building on East Lovell Street, opposite the schoolhouse. In the spring of 1890, the company was ten million capsules behind in its orders and a year later

a five-story addition to the building on East Lovell was constructed, this building to be used for the manufacture of elixirs and syrups.³⁰

Gilmore Brothers was another concern that arrived in Kalamazoo during the early 1880's. John Gilmore began his store in an unpretentious building on South Burdick and three years later he was joined by his brother James. By 1889 their store had taken over the entire two stories and basement of the old Upjohn Pill and Granule Company and the plate glass front of their store was one of the first of its kind in the city. Gilmore Brothers operated on the one-price system.³¹

Ihling Brothers and H. H. Everard & Co. was still another company that was prospering. In 1887/88 they erected a "handsome" building on the corner of Main and Edwards, which they occupied until recently. Another familiar name in Kalamazoo industry is that of Clarage. In the late 1870's, Thomas Clarage and C. H. Bird founded a company that is known today as Clarage Fan. The founding in 1886 of a building and loan association is a development in Kalamazoo business that should also be noted.³²

In 1892 the name of Todd entered the business and industrial circles of Kalamazoo. In that year A. M. Todd bought property on the southwest corner of North Rose and Kalamazoo Streets, where he erected a four-story building for the distilling of peppermint. At this time Todd was the largest manufacturer of American essential oils and was moving his company from Nottawa to Kalamazoo. At that time more than half of the oil of peppermint, spearmint and tansy used in the world was distilled in Michigan.³³

VI ✓

Although there was dust in the streets and "slops" were still being poured out in the open, the appearance of Kalamazoo was

changing rapidly. By 1874 the village had sixty-five miles of streets and eighty-six miles of plank sidewalks, sixteen bridges over Arcadia Creek, eleven over Portage Creek and four over the Kalamazoo River where it was within the village limits. Six years later the Board of Trustees voted \$15,000 for the construction of a sewer system, which was in operation three years later and was being examined by men from different parts of the country.³⁴

In late 1881 the village government signed a contract with the Brush Electric Company to furnish light for the village. The electric lights were turned on August 23 of the following year to the delight of everyone. The Park was thronged until ten o'clock in the evening by people from all parts of the village who were eager to see the electric lights. To the crowds these lights were an unfailing source of wonder. By late 1885 the Edison incandescent lamp had made its appearance and was being used in the paper mill, the sixteen-candle power lights making the building look very brilliant at night. In March of the following year, the City Council approved the electric lighting of the city streets and by early May the streets and all of the business portion of the city were illuminated by electricity. The electric lights were popular and the people demanded more.³⁵

Kalamazoo was also building a modern water system; it was during these years that the large water mains, like the twenty-inch pipe from the waterworks to Vine Street, were being laid. By 1885 there were twenty-two miles of water mains and pipe and 177 fire hydrants.³⁶

The telephone, invented in the early 1870's, was another development that was catching on rapidly. The first telephones were installed in Kalamazoo in early 1878, the paper mill, the cement works and Merrill & McCourtie, flour millers, apparently being the first

businesses to have telephones. By the spring of the year, there were around five hundred telephones in Michigan and by May 1880, Kalamazoo was ready for a telephone exchange if forty subscribers could be secured. The cost was \$48 a year for the service. Evidently enough subscribers were obtained, for we find that in December the people of the village were objecting to the large, ungainly and unsightly poles that were being erected. Kalamazoo was never happy with these poles and in 1899 the City Council ruled that telephone wires must be laid underground. In the fall of 1894 work was begun on long distance lines, so that Kalamazoo would have direct connections with outside cities and five years later telephone service between Detroit and Kalamazoo went into operation.³⁷

The telephone was indeed a marvel. On Sunday, December 6, 1880, an invalid living on east South Street heard the entire morning and evening services of the Presbyterian Church "with great distinctness."³⁸

Local transportation was another area that was experiencing innovation and improvement. In December 1873 S. E. Walbridge was given permission to use the street from Alcott's mill to the side tracks of the Lake Shore and Michigan Railroad, where it crossed Alcott Street, to build and operate a horse railroad track. There seems to be no record, however, that anything ever came of this project, and Kalamazoo had to wait for more than ten years after this for its first street railroad.³⁹

The first cars began running to and from the fairgrounds on Sunday, June 8, 1884; these were horse-drawn, but greatly appreciated, especially in foul weather. During the severe winter of 1885, the cars were a great boon to people who had no other way to get home. Fares on these cars were cheap; to ride from the fairgrounds to Mountain Home Cemetery cost five cents. Although the street

cars were popular, they were not a profitable venture. In July 1889 the Court ordered the sale of the Kalamazoo Street Railroad Company for \$106,900 to pay the mortgage and interest; apparently no one was willing to pay this price, for in the following spring the company was sold for \$42,550. After this, interest in an electric railway developed, but its practical realization was delayed for several years by litigation over patent rights. One of the contestants in this litigation was George F. Green, a Kalamazoo inventor.*⁴⁰

Three years of negotiation and construction were necessary to achieve an electric railway for Kalamazoo. The most serious difficulty to surmount was the refusal of the railroads to grant rights of way or permission to the street car company to hang its trolley wires over railroad crossings. By the first of June, 1893,^{however,} eleven miles of track had been completed and the cars began running on the 18th. On the following Sunday, three thousand passengers rode the Portage, Asylum Avenue and East and West Main cars. The street railway was formally opened July 3, and the occasion was celebrated by a barbecue, lemonade and pop corn, athletic contests, a ball game, fireworks and, of course, speeches. The invited guests were taken over the entire tracks, a trip that took three hours.

* As early as 1857, Green had invented an instrument that produced a vibrating motion by use of electromagnetism. The Gazette reported that by a very simple contrivance he had obtained an almost perfect vibrating motion, using a self-acting apparatus that reversed the electric current instantaneously, so that a backward and forward motion was produced without any of the difficulty that had previously stood in the way of operators.

Green also invented an electric bell, an electric fan, a sewing machine motor that he attached to his wife's sewing machine and electric cash carriers, but the great ambition of his life was to perfect an electric railroad system. In 1870 he built an experimental railroad, operated from a stationary source of electrical power and four or five years later he constructed a model electric railroad. In 1891 he obtained a patent for his electric railroad, after a prolonged contest in the U.S. Patent Office. He died about six months later, never having realized the rewards of his genius.⁴¹

VII VI

This was also a period of great activity in building. Although many houses were constructed, the supply could not keep up with the demand, and many of those coming to Kalamazoo were unable to find housing. Besides a number of schools and the public library, two other important public buildings were erected.

Kalamazoo had always lacked a suitable public hall. For two decades Firemen's Hall had served as a public meeting place, but its inadequacies were altogether too evident. Union Hall, which was built in the middle sixties, did not meet the village's needs either. In the spring of 1882, however, Kalamazoo acquired its first real public hall--the Academy of Music, which stood on South Rose Street until 1970. Part of the building was occupied by Jackson's Flower Shop for fifty years. The hall cost \$66,000 to build and it had a seating capacity of 1,250. Kalamazoo was proud of the Academy of Music, and boasted that it had one of the finest halls in the State, ^{and} the early photographs of the building ~~do~~ indicate that it was well furnished and quite elaborate.⁴²

It was also becoming obvious that the old Court House, whose construction had been begun in 1834 or 1835 and completed in 1838 and then remodeled and enlarged in 1866, was no longer adequate for the needs of Kalamazoo County. A new Court House was approved by the voters in the spring of 1883. The old building was then removed to the southeast corner of the court yard and a year or two later it was moved to Water Street where it stood for many years.⁴³

The cornerstone of the new building was laid on a beautiful Fourth of July in 1884. The parade began at ten in the morning and the formal exercises commenced a little before noon and closed

at three. The historical address, given by Major W. C. Ranson of Lansing, was interesting and informative. The new Court House, which was electrically lighted, was opened to the public on October 14, 1885. The people of Kalamazoo were especially delighted that the sheds and stables had been removed from the grounds.⁴⁴

One cause for regret was that most of the beautiful burr oaks which had graced court house square for many years had to^{be} cut down to make room for the new building. Not only these, but many others in the city had to be felled, so that it was lamented that the burr oaks would soon be a thing of the past. Today only a few of these trees remain.⁴⁵

The post office was another building of which Kalamazoo was proud. Not until 1883 was the post office made a first class one, even though it was doing enough business by 1880 to entitle the village to free mail delivery. This service was begun on July 1, 1882, but a postoffice building had to wait for several more years. Finally, in March 1889, Representative Julius Caesar Burrows, by means of some clever parliamentary maneuvering, succeeded in getting a bill through Congress authorizing a public building for the city.

The Brees lot on the southeast corner of South and Burdick was chosen as the site for the new post office. The building was two stories high, its style Romanesque leaning toward Renaissance, the "elegant" interior was of white oak and the exterior, brick with sandstone foundation and trimmings. The total cost of the building, including the site, was around \$75,000. It was opened to the public on Sunday morning, February 14, 1892.⁴⁶

The church buildings that had been erected forty and fifty years ago were now too small for their congregations. The First

Presbyterian Church, built in 1848/49 by Alexander Cameron and which had a seating capacity of one thousand, making it the largest church in the village, had to be rebuilt because it was destroyed by fire on December 5 and 6, 1883. Although in many churches of this period intolerance and bigotry were common, this attitude seems not to have prevailed in Kalamazoo. After the fire the pastor and trustees of the First Congregational Church offered their sympathy to the Presbyterians and the equal use of their church. The Presbyterians were told, "Come share with us. The arrangements shall be such as you yourselves most desire."

The Presbyterian membership met soon after the fire and in a meeting, at which Alexander Cameron presided, voted to build a new church on the same site. The new church was dedicated on July 1, 1885, and was considered to be the most conspicuous public building in the city; it had a fine \$5,000 organ and a well-equipped kitchen in its chapel. The Church at that time stood on the corner of Rose and South Streets and faced the Park.⁴⁷

During the summer of 1884, old St. Luke's was razed and the construction of a new Episcopal Church begun.⁴⁸

The Congregationalists also felt the need for a new church building, the cornerstone of which was laid on July 3, 1884, and ministers from the First Reformed, North Presbyterian, First Methodist, First Baptist and First Presbyterian Churches participated in the services. The new church was dedicated in June of the following year with "impressive ceremonies" in which most of the congregations of the city participated. This church, it was claimed, was the ^{most} beautiful in western Michigan, being built of mottled sandstone from the quarries of Ionia and with the interior finished in red oak.⁴⁹

For over thirty years the Dutch people had been an important part of the life of Kalamazoo. The older people seemingly continued to cling to the Dutch language and to their old customs and ways, whereas their children thought of themselves as Americans and favored the English language. And so we find that in the summer of 1885 quite a number of the young people of the First Reformed Church organized as the Second Reformed Church, with services being conducted in English. The church was located on South Park Street and was dedicated on August 16, 1887, the Congregational and Methodist ministers assisting in the services.⁵⁰

The Simpson Methodist Church on West North Street was another church that was built at this time. It was dedicated on February 21, 1886, and when it was built, it stood in a lovely grove.⁵¹

The last church to be built during this period was the Unitarian or Peoples' Church. Silas Hubbard, a prominent Kalamazoo businessman and one of the chief organizers of the Kalamazoo Paper Company in 1868, gave \$20,000 toward the new church--money which he had saved by abstaining from the use of tobacco for fifty years. Hubbard was the only member who had signed the articles of corporation in 1860 who was still living in 1893, and he died a few months before the dedication of the church on December 19, 1894.⁵²

The Methodist Episcopal Church celebrated its half century in April 1884. The Rev. J. T. Robe, the first Methodist minister to preach at Bronson, presided at the love feast held on Sunday morning, April 26, 1884. Of the original seven members of the church, two were present at the fiftieth anniversary services.⁵³

~~VIII~~ ~~VII~~

A hospital was one of Kalamazoo's great needs. The Academy of Medicine discussed this problem quite fully and the City Council

was petitioned to be responsible for a hospital, but nothing was done about the matter until late 1888 when Bishop Caspar Borgess of Detroit gave Father O'Brien of Alalamazoo \$5,000 for a city hospital. Two years later the property of the Rev. Moses Hill on Portage, just north of Lovell Street, was purchased for the ~~Borgess~~ Hospital, ^{which} ~~The hospital~~ was to be operated by the Sisters of Charity and ~~was to be~~ open to all who needed or desired treatment.

Borgess Hospital was formally opened November 28, 1889. In it were twenty-four rooms, of which seven were singles; there were also five private and "elegantly furnished" rooms. The cost of the single rooms was \$2.00 a day, the ward beds cost \$1.00 and the private rooms, \$3.00 a day. Every room had electric bells, the work of Father Ryan, who was considered to be an electrical genius.

An insurance plan was inaugurated in connection with the opening of the hospital. For five dollars a person could buy a ticket that would entitle him or her, in case of sickness, to a bed and treatment in the ward at any time during the year from date of purchase, no matter how long the illness continued. Ten dollars would provide a private room under the same conditions.⁵⁴

Although hospitals were signs of definite progress in the treatment of illness, the diseases that had plagued mankind for centuries were still unconquered. Consumption or tuberculosis and diptheria were responsible for many deaths. During the latter half of 1884, there were 256 cases of diptheria, fifty-two of them fatal. One of those who died early the following year was Dr. Upjohn's little daughter Ida. In the spring of 1891, it was reported that in one family four children had died of the disease in two weeks. Children were the greatest victims, not only of diptheria, but also of many of the other prevalent diseases. Of the twenty-

one persons buried at Riverside Cemetery during August 1886, twelve were children under ten years of age.⁵⁵

But there were no lack of cures; the newspapers were filled with ~~the~~ advertisements of all kinds of medicines, drugs and devices--remedies that were sworn to cure rheumatism, nervousness, consumption, (Dr. Only's lung pad absolutely cured consumption and asthma) deafness, lost manhood, etc., etc. In the la grippe or influenza epidemic that struck Kalamazoo in January 1890, over two hundred cases had been cured during a ten-day period by the use of D'Arcambal's wonderful liver pills.⁵⁶

IX . VIII

Although much of Kalamazoo's energies and interests were occupied with the development of new industries, municipal improvements and new buildings, politics was still a subject of great interest. Usually the Democrats were on the losing side, but there were elections, such as the charter election of April 11, 1871, which resulted in a complete Republican rout--every Democrat was elected. Unfortunately for the Republicans, the nasty weather on election day did not dampen the enthusiasm of the Democrats as it did theirs. And the several dozen illegal votes cast by the Democrats further discouraged the Republicans; these votes, the Telegraph observed, were cast by the gravel train railroad workers who were no more residents of Kalamazoo than they were of Alaska.⁵⁷

But politics was not always serious; there were those who took a light-humored view of the business, as the following incident indicates.

On November 18, two weeks after the election of 1872, a crowd of people gathered in front of the post office to see how Captain Judson would carry out the conditions of the wager he had lost in the recent election. On the sidewalk stood a wheelbarrow and a

barrel of flour, gaily decorated with banners. Judson was introduced by the winner of the bet, J. H. Stone, and then Judson made a speech that was continually interrupted by roars of laughter and frequent applause. After the speeches the Captain descended from the balcony, harnessed himself to the wheelbarrow and went on his way, Stone and a man by the name of Brownell leading the way. The flour was given to a poor widow on Cedar Street.⁵⁸

The great political issues of the seventies and eighties were civil service reform, cheap money and occasionally woman suffrage. Woman suffrage was first put on a Michigan ballot in 1874, but the issue lost nearly four to one. Women, however, were beginning to receive some legal recognition. A law passed in 1881 provided that any woman, twenty-one years of age or older, who had property, or was the parent or legal guardian of children in the school census, was a voter.⁵⁹

The school election of 1892 seems to have been the first one in which women offered themselves as candidates for the school board. The two women were a Mrs. Harriet S. Clough and Mrs. Rachel B. Upjohn, the wife of Dr. W. E. Upjohn. Although they were not elected, they gave the men stiff competition. The following year, however, a Mary E. Pengelly succeeded in getting elected to the Board, receiving 1537 votes, even though the inspectors of the election surmised that many votes were cast illegally by men and women less than twenty-one years old, but no attempt was made to indicate which sex had cast the more of these votes.⁶⁰

In 1884 the Republicans were jubilant that they had triumphed in the local elections and had gained control of the new city administration; the national elections, however, were of little comfort to them. Grover Cleveland, the Democratic Presidential candidate, won the Presidency, even though Kalamazoo had given him only

one ward. Although the campaign of 1884 was one of the most scurrilous in American history, both the Gazette and Telegraph conducted extremely mild campaigns. One hesitates to speculate what Volney Hascall and George Fitch would have done with the opportunities offered them in this campaign.

An amusing aftermath of the election was the wrangling that took place between the various factions of the Democratic Party in Kalamazoo over the postmastership. Not until October 1885 was a new postmaster appointed--Andrew J. Shakespeare, the editor of the Gazette.⁶¹

In 1888 the Republicans made an all out effort, and incidentally spent huge sums of money in the right places, to regain the Presidency. The issues in the campaign were the tariff and pensions for Civil War veterans. Kalamazoo promoted the cause with an immense torchlight parade in which "2,143" and nearly five hundred cavalry participated. The streets were thronged with thousands and many residences and businesses were colorfully decorated. To add to the excitement there was a terrific runaway at the beginning of the parade. About \$200 worth of fireworks became ignited in an express wagon and a fiery display occurred. The frightened horses ran west on Main Street with great speed, three men were thrown from the wagon, one of them being somewhat hurt. As the team flew up the street, rockets and candles shot into the crowd and several people were knocked down by the horses. Among the Republicans in Kalamazoo were a number of old men who boasted that forty-eight years ago they had voted for another Harrison.⁶²

As the nineteenth century drew to a close, there were indications of political maturity. The campaign of 1892--the election was another loss for the Republicans--was conducted quite circumspectly. The Telegraph made the following observation:

The campaign which has just closed has been remarkable for its lack of extreme partisanship, lack of personal attack on candidates and immense street demonstrations. It has been preeminently a campaign of education and thought,...

This sort of campaign is an evidence of political and social progress--an indication that senseless personalities and bitter partisanship are giving way to reason and candor.⁶³

~~X~~ IX

Turning to the recreational aspects of Kalamazoo life, we find that the annual pioneer reunions were one of the most significant and popular events of the period. The first annual meeting and reunion of Kalamazoo pioneers was held in Kalamazoo on the grounds of National Park on July 29, 1871. A person who had been an adult in July 1840 was considered to have been an old settler.

These reunions grew to be large affairs. The third one, which was held at Schoolcraft, was attended by nearly 2,500 persons, eight carloads coming from Kalamazoo and vicinity. The fifth one, which was held at Vicksburg, was attended by at least 3,000 and five passenger trains were not sufficient to take care of the crowd at Kalamazoo, so that eight box cars had to be used to transport the rest of the people to Vicksburg. The eighteenth ^{event} reunion, held at Long Lake, was attended by 8,000 and it was estimated that 12,000 were present the following year.

At these pioneer reunions men like H. G. Wells, George Torrey, Henry and Frank Little, E. Lakin Brown and others gave addresses that are significant for the early history of Kalamazoo and Kalamazoo County. To the modern historian it is consoling to learn that some of the problems of the history of pioneer Kalamazoo which baffled him were often questions to which the pioneer historian also sought the answers.⁶⁴

One sad aspect of these meetings was the reading of the names

of those who had died since the last meeting. In 1893 only six of the pioneers who had come to Kalamazoo County before 1830 were still alive and not one of them lived in Kalamazoo; by the end of the nineteenth century almost all of the old settlers were gone. What is surprising to one who has checked the obituaries of the 1840's, '50's and '60's is that so many of the pioneers survived to reach the ages of seventy, eighty and even ninety.⁶⁵

Before leaving the pioneers, it is fitting to give further recognition to ~~Nezekiah~~ Ezekiah G. Wells, perhaps Kalamazoo's most prominent and public-spirited citizen from the time of his arrival in Kalamazoo County in July 1833 until his death in April 1885. At the age of twenty-one, he was a member of Michigan's first constitutional convention and served on a number of important committees. He was a Presidential elector in 1840 and 1860 and played an important role in the founding of the Republican Party. He presided over the county court from 1847 to 1851, when the court went out of existence. Wells was also a delegate to the Constitutional Convention of 1850 and the constitution drafted by this convention remained the fundamental law of Michigan until 1909. In 1861 the Michigan Legislature elected him a member of the State Board of Agriculture and for a number of years he was president of the State Agriculture College and did much to establish its reputation as a leading educational institution.

Wells was also active in school and village affairs and in a time of crisis was often asked to provide counsel and leadership. The greatest honor of his career came in 1874 when President Grant appointed him presiding judge of the Court of Alabama Claims, which allocated the \$15,500,000 awarded the United States for damages done by English-outfitted Southern commerce raiders, the most notable being the Alabama. Small wonder that the Telegraph said

~~said~~ after his death, "We will miss him." 66

The Fourth of July celebrations were still enthusiastically celebrated and often largely attended--the attendance at the 1872 event was estimated at between 20,000 and 25,000. One of the highlights of this celebration were the addresses by Vice-President Schuyler Colfax and Ex-Governor Austin Blair. Firemen's reviews, baseball games--the Unas of Kalamazoo beat the Libertys of Chicago 30 to 18, fireworks and balloon ascensions were also featured at this and other Fourth of July programs. 67

The celebration of the Centennial Fourth in 1876 was undoubtedly the greatest and most successful of all. The weather was all that could be wished for; many houses and public buildings were colorfully decorated; the parade was well over a mile long; the oration by Gen. Isaac R. Sherwood of Toledo, Ohio, and the historical address by the Hon. Foster Pratt, M.D. of Kalamazoo were worthwhile and stirring; the choral and band music was inspiring; and the fireworks were spectacular. 68

Lectures, especially during the '70's, continued to be an important part of the entertainment and cultural scene. Mark Twain spoke in Kalamazoo on December 16, 1871, and some eighty people came from Plainwell to hear him. In March 1874 Thomas Nast of Tweed Ring fame lectured and "cartooned" at Union Hall; this was the closing lecture of the season sponsored by the Young Men's Library Association. Robert Ingersoll also spoke in Kalamazoo. The popular play of the day was "Ten Nights in a Barroom." 69

The greatest event of the summer or fall, at least for the young, was Barnum's great show--three trains of forty cars each. On October 24, 1872, this circus drew the largest crowds of any place in the State and Kalamazoo supposedly was the only place where the circus management had to stop selling tickets because

the tent was full.⁷⁰

Roller skating arrived in Kalamazoo during the winter of 1875. Union Hall was converted to a roller rink and the Telegraph wrote that "roller skating will receive a hearty welcome here, as it combines at once a degree of excellence and pleasure that is seldom approached in the way of healthful exercise and innocent amusement." During the next decade roller skating was all the rage; featured at the rinks were five-mile and obstacle races. Although the sport was very popular with the masses, not every one approved. Bishop Gillespie of the Episcopal Church said that he had no desire to assume the antagonistic position toward progressive euchre, a popular card game of the day, that he held toward the skating rink.⁷¹

Roller skating was the sport of the winter months and baseball, the great attraction of the warmer months. In 1886 Kalamazoo acquired a new ball park on Wheaton Avenue. In the spring of the following year, its team was admitted into the Ohio League, of which it became the champion team. When the team returned to Kalamazoo, it was welcomed by the city band, the mayor and several hundred people.⁷²

Baseball was indeed a popular sport and fans were interested not only in the local team, but also in the game as it was played elsewhere. The Detroit baseball club was beginning to have its problems and the Telegraph commented that "People wonder why the Detroit baseball club doesn't organize a league of its own, made up of clubs it can beat."⁷³

Events such as the demonstration of the Gordon self-binding harvester, invented by John H. Gordon, attracted the curiosity and attention of many. Several hundred people gathered on a summer day in July 1874, at the farm of James Taylor, about a mile west

of Burdick Street, to see the machine in operation. It was later reported that the twenty-one machines in the demonstration performed wonders.⁷⁴

The good news for the ladies were the Paris fashions that began to appear in Kalamazoo in the mid seventies. And the girls, it seems, were fascinated by the new fad of chewing gum.⁷⁵

And when there were neither politics nor sports to talk about, there was always the weather, for Kalamazoo had some really nasty weather, even then. The winter of 1872/73 was extremely severe, with temperatures reportedly dropping to thirty-four degrees below zero. As late as March 12, there were still thirty inches of snow on the ground and this date marked the 111th day of consecutive sleighing since the first snowfall. The previous record had seventy-five days. These were the years when one of the pleasant sounds on the city's streets during the winter months was the merry jingling of the sleighbells.⁷⁶

Runaways remained a perennial source of excitement and were usually given vivid reporting, as the following: On September 1, 1887, occurred a "spectacular runaway." A spirited team hitched to an ice wagon became frightened and dashed down Main Street. When they came to the south side of the street, they bolted, wagon and all, into the open door of Kahn & Hecht's clothing store, demolishing the door.

"Nothing like advertising," observed an employee of the store, addressing the big crowd that at once gathered in front of the store. "You can't keep 'em away. Even the horses insist on coming in and looking over our positive bargains in worsted pants and cheap overcoats."⁷⁷

Both the Young Men's and Young Women's Christian Associations were making positive contributions to the education and social life

of the young people of Kalamazoo. In the spring of 1887, a movement was begun to erect a building for the Young Men's Christian Association on the corner of Main and Park, a site that had been occupied by St. Luke's Episcopal Church for fifty years. The original plans for the building included space for the Board of Education and the public library. But the raising of the money for the building proved to be a long and tedious project; in the fall of 1889, \$4,000 of the \$37,000 or \$40,000 required was still unsubscribed. In the spring of the following year, the Association still lacked \$2,000, but on its anniversary the local churches raised over \$1,800.

Finally, in December of 1890, steps were taken to begin the construction of the new YMCA and bids were sought for tearing down old St. Luke's Church. On June 1, 1892, the building committee of the organization accepted the new building. It was a great success. During the first twenty months of its occupancy, 170,266 young men visited the YMCA and its membership stood at 725; on July 1, 1892, it had been only twenty.⁷⁸

The Young Women's Christian Association was organized in 1885, with thirty-five members; three years later there were over a hundred active members. In 1890 the public was notified that the YWCA rooms would be open every day from twelve to one and from 2:30 till 5:30, that all ladies would be welcome and that a good library was at their disposal. The association was also planning to open an employment service for women.⁷⁹

~~XI~~ ~~X~~

The cause of education continued to show progress, although it had its setbacks. Higher education, especially, was having its difficulties.

The public school system of Kalamazoo moved forward during this period, in spite of uncertainties and problems. The school statistics, though, lead one to one to wonder about the effectiveness of the school program; they are not at all clear. In June 1872 the enrollment of the public schools was given as 2,886, but the average attendance only 1,206. Eight years later the total enrollment was said to be 2,522 and the average attendance, 1,462; however, two months earlier the enrollment had been reported as 1,713 and the average attendance, 1,556. These figures make it difficult to ascertain just what was transpiring in the schools of Kalamazoo.⁸⁰

Salaries were low in those days. Primary teachers were paid eight dollars a week and teachers in the higher grades, nine to eleven dollars; yet there were always more applicants for teaching positions than there were vacancies. Henry F. French, who had been appointed superintendent of schools in March 1880, received a salary of \$1,600 a year.⁸¹

In the summer of 1872, objections were voiced by some in the village concerning the legality of the high school department of the school system, especially the branches that were not specifically English, and the office of superintendent of schools, if these were to be supported by a tax upon the school district. A special committee was appointed by the Board of Education, which reported on August 30. Although the Attorney-General had given as his opinion that the use of tax money for the support of high school

education other than English was legal, and that the Board had the right to *employ* a superintendent of schools, this position was abolished and the office of First Teacher substituted, whose duties were ~~to~~ similar to those of the superintendent.

The purchase of books for the library at Union School seems to have been questioned also, for at the Board meeting in April of the following year, the District Library Committee was asked to investigate and report at the next meeting from which fund the payment of library books should be made.

In 1873 the dispute over the legality of using tax monies for the support of the high school came to a climax in the case of Charles E. Stuart, et al. vs. School District No. 1 of Kalamazoo, et al. In February 1874, Judge Charles R. Brown of the Circuit Court ruled that the law authorizing the establishment of graded and high schools was constitutional, that the graded schools and the high school of Kalamazoo were legally organized, and that the Board of Education had the power to employ a superintendent of schools and to prescribe a course of study not limited to the primary English branches. The plaintiffs, however, were not satisfied with the decision and the case was appealed to the State Supreme Court.

But in July of that same year, the Supreme Court also found that taxation for the support of high schools was constitutional--the famous Kalamazoo Case, which has meant so much in the development and progress of secondary education, not only in Michigan, but also in the nation as a whole.⁸²

Innovations came hard in the public schools of the day. At the annual school meeting on July 8, 1878, it was voted after a hot discussion that \$500 should be appropriated for the introduction of music into the public schools.⁸³

Old Union, which had been the pride of the village less than twenty-five years before, was condemned in the spring of 1880 as "unsfe and unfit for further occupancy." The experts who examined the building reported that the materials used in its construction had been of inferior quality and the work done in a superficial manner. On June 28 the Board of Education decided that Union School was to be "formally condemned as being useless and unfit for further use for school purpose." 84

The people of Kalamazoo, however, were not willing to accept the Board's verdict and at the annual school meeting, a committee of sixteen, under the chairmanship of H. G. Wells, was appointed to examine the building. This committee reported at the adjourned school meeting on July 26 and agreed that the school must be replaced.

During succeeding weeks, there was much discussion and a number of heated meetings over the question of the location of the new high school and whether Kalamazoo even should have a high school. Finally, on August 26, the voters of the school district approved the location of both high and ward schools on the Old Union site and voted unanimously to issue bonds for \$30,000. The meeting at which the final decision was made saw a real work out in parliamentary procedure due to the large amount of discussion and dispute over the priority of substitutes and amendments to a main question. At first the wrangling was amusing to the audience, but its continuance proved to be boring.⁸⁵

The new high school, which was opened in January 1882, was described as "spacious, elegant, airy, and well-lighted." The style of its architecture was Queen Anne or New Renaissance and its capacity was six hundred pupils. The class rooms and study

halls were equipped with electric clocks and speaking tubes leading to the superintendent's office. In the description of the new building nothing was said of a library room, but two years later it was mentioned that the high school had spent fifty dollars for books for its library.⁸⁶

The high school enrollment was still small; in 1882 the graduating class numbered sixteen and in 1889, twenty-four, which was one half the number of the freshman class of 1885.⁸⁷

There were now seven primary or ward schools in the city. These were the schools on Woodward Avenue, Frank Street, East Avenue, Lovell, South Burdick, Lake and Ransom Streets. St. Augustine was the only parochial school and its enrollment in 1890 totaled 396.⁸⁸

Adequate support for the school system remained a problem. At the annual school meeting of 1889, the budget was reduced from \$35,690 to \$34,000 and a motion was made to reduce Superintendent French's salary from \$2,200 to \$1,800. Whereupon French informed the voters that when he came to Kalamazoo nine years ago, his salary had been \$1,800 and if the people wanted to reduce it, the position of superintendent of schools would be vacant as of that moment. The motion was then ruled out of order.⁸⁹

Finally, it is interesting to note that some of the issues that perplex parents, teachers and school administrators today were already troublesome nearly a century ago. In the fall of 1883, some of the prominent citizens of Lovell Township in Kent County began a suit in Kent County Circuit Court to prevent school trustees and teachers of the school district from reading the Bible and singing hymns in school. But Kent County was not the only county in Michigan that had to face this problem. Fourteen years later a district judge ruled that the compulsory reading of the

Bible in school was unconstitutional and the following year the question came up before the State Supreme Court.⁹⁰

~~XII~~ ~~XI~~

Kalamazoo's two colleges were struggling for survival. Kalamazoo College was forced to surmount at least two crises, one of them financial. In 1885 the people of the city were told that \$60,000 had to be raised if the college was to stay in Kalamazoo. Fortunately there were people who were concerned over the future of the school. Mrs. Mannes Israel gave \$3,000 in memory of her son, Sergeant or Lt. Edward Israel, astronomer of the ill-fated Greeley Expedition of 1883/84. Other concerned citizens also made their contributions, so that two years later the college was out of debt and had a surplus over its expenses.⁹¹

Having weathered a serious financial crisis, the ~~institution~~^{institute} was soon to face one of an entirely different nature, but one that was even more serious.

On March 1, 1890, twenty students blindfolded two popular professors and then took them for a long walk. The two men were left in a cornfield some distance from Mountain Home Cemetery. One of the teachers immediately reported the incident to police. The faculty of the college then met and voted final suspension for the leader of the group, a year's suspension for two others and the remainder of the year for the others. Thereupon the student body met and asked the faculty to reconsider its action, which it refused to do. The students then announced that they would withdraw from the school and when classes met on the following Monday, only three male students were present. When it became clear that the trustees of the college were supporting the faculty, the majority of the students withdrew and the spring term of the school opened with an enrollment of only twenty-two.⁹²

This affair displeased some of the churches in Kalamazoo and since the president of the college, Morison A. Willcox, felt that he was the figurehead of what the churches resented, he tendered his resignation, which the ~~college~~ trustees accepted in December. Some fifteen months later the ~~college~~^{school} seemed to have recovered quite completely from the ill will and distrust that the students' escapade had created. At least, ~~the college~~^{it} was able to appeal successfully to the general public for funds; as early as March 1892, \$85,000 of the \$100,000 additional endowment fund, to which John D. Rockefeller had given \$15,000, had been raised.⁹³

Michigan Seminary, a college for young women, commonly known as Mount Holyoke, after an existence of nearly fifty years, finally succumbed to its problems. It had been incorporated in December 1856, but the school did not open its doors until January 1867, when it had six teachers, a music teacher, a matron and fifty-four pupils; the institution was Christian but non-sectarian. It was located on a hill east of Kalamazoo, at the intersection of Seminary and Gull Streets. By 1898 its financial difficulties had become critical and the public was notified that the Seminary would have to close its doors unless its friends came to the rescue. Some help was forthcoming through the next few years, but apparently never enough to put the school on a sound financial footing. On May 10, 1907, the decision was made to close the school.⁹⁴

The principles of the school were high and its discipline severe, as is indicated by the suspension of seven young ladies in the early spring of 1901 for walking on a Sunday with young men of their acquaintance. The severity of its discipline may have been a factor in the ~~school's~~^{its} small enrollment, but it probably was not an important one. Discipline was strict in most schools of the day and especially in the female colleges.⁹⁵

Chapter 8
THE KALAMAZOO PUBLIC LIBRARY
1872-1893

I

The year 1872 marks the beginning of a new era in the history of the Kalamazoo Library. For ten years it had been essentially a school library, even though it contained books that were more suited for adult reading than for student use.

At the annual school election of 1872, Frank Little, who had been a member of the Board of Education for thirteen years, failed to win reelection. Of a total of 433 votes cast, he received twenty-five and Thomas S. Cobb, 202. When the Board met on September 3, another member resigned and Little was ~~asked to fill~~ asked to fill the vacancy, but he refused to accept the appointment.¹

The Board was now without a librarian and there apparently ensued considerable discussion concerning the administration of the library. Some considered placing it under the jurisdiction of the Ladies' Library Association, which proposal was vigorously opposed by Little, who said that the effect of such a step would be unfortunate if not disastrous. He described the Association as being an antagonistic institution and said that putting the District Library in its keeping would be contrary to the policy of a free library. Little's position was upheld by the Board and its members retired to the Library Room for an informal meeting. After some discussion it was voted to hire Miss Jennie M. Wolcott

as librarian at a salary of \$100 a year.²

The Library Committee, consisting of H. O. Hitchcock and Thomas S. Cobb, who was also secretary of the Board, must also have been appointed at the September 3 meeting, for it recommended the hiring of Miss Wolcott and its recommendation was accepted, though with some misgivings on the part of the members of the Board who were afraid that the Library might be scattered and lost.³

The members of the Board at this time were F. M. Curtenius, president, William A. House, Latham Hull, David Fisher, and the two members of the Library Committee.

Before entering upon her duties, Miss Wolcott went before the Board with two proposals: the first one, that the books in the Library be cataloged; and second, that the Library be open to the general public. The latter proposal may have been previously discussed by the Board, having been strongly advocated by Dr. Hitchcock and Thomas Cobb. Some of the members seem to have doubted the wisdom of this step, for they were concerned that it would be difficult to keep the books from being lost. Librarians and library boards in those days had a horror of lost books.

On October 1, 1872, Miss Wolcott laid a manuscript copy of the District Library catalog before the Board and it was voted that the chair appoint a special committee to publish an edition of five hundred copies. The published catalog consisted of sixty-three pages and the books were divided into seventeen categories. Among these were Art, Fruit, and Flowers, Biography, Cabinet Library and Library Wonders, Dictionaries, Encyclopedias, etc., and Essays and Miscellaneous. The Cabinet Library contained books on African history, American history, ancient and modern literature, Curiosities of Human Nature, Enterprise and Art of Man and Glances

at the Sciences. In the Library of Wonders were books on architecture, balloon ascents, earthquakes and volcanoes, Pompeii and thunder and lightning.⁴

At the October 1 meeting, persons who were interested in the Library were requested to hand to the Committee on Library the titles of any books they would like to see *procured*.⁵

A week later, at a special meeting of the Board, the Committee on Library submitted eight rules and regulations for the use of the Library of School District No. 1. These rules were accepted, apparently without too much discussion. With the exception of the first and eighth rules, they did not differ materially from those Frank Little had submitted previously. The first rule stated that books might "be drawn every Saturday, from 9 o'clock A.M. to 12 M., and from half past 1 P.M. to 4 P.M."

The eighth rule was the really significant one. It provided that "Any Resident of the District may draw books, but children under fourteen years of age may be required to present to the Librarian written requests from their parents and guardians." Since this meeting of the Board was held on Tuesday, the following Saturday, the only day of the week that the Library was open, fell on October 12, the date that has been traditionally celebrated as the birthday of the Kalamazoo Public Library. *⁶

The opening of the Library to the general public seems to have been welcomed by the people of Kalamazoo. On October 14 the Daily Telegraph reported that

* Technically this is not the beginning of the Kalamazoo Public Library; for its antecedents go back to the little township library that was probably begun in 1845. The Library still has a few of the books that originally were part of the township library. Then in February 1860 the library of School District No. 1 was organized, of which the public library was a direct outgrowth. About all that can be said of October 12 is that it is the anniversary of the day on which the school library was opened to all the residents of the village and not to school children only.

The District Library was open to the public last Saturday afternoon and great was the crowd of 'our young folks' that carried off the books. Miss Wolcott, the new librarian, shows herself kind, prompt, and efficient in that position, and will become popular with the patrons of the Library. We like the new regulations which allows any resident of the village to draw books.⁷

The Library now consisted of about 2,800 usable books, housed in two small closets. When ~~the~~^{it} Library was open, the librarian would bring the books from the closets, so that patrons could make their selections; soon after Miss Wolcott took over, the books were placed on open shelves.

The new librarian soon realized that the Library would not be able to meet the needs of the people if it was open on Saturdays only; on December 3, 1873, she recommended to the Board that ~~the~~^{it} Library be open every weekday afternoon, except Monday, and all day Saturday, which recommendation ~~was~~^{was} accepted. The all-day Saturday opening was for the convenience of the school children.

Soon after the District Library was opened to the public, its circulation began to increase. During the last week of December 1872, the circulation was 472 volumes, 188 of them on Tuesday, the coldest day of the season. By the middle of January 1873, it had increased to six hundred a week. The circulation statistics for these years are at times confusing, for it is not always clear what time period was being used. But one is probably safe in concluding that the total circulation of books during the period beginning September 3, 1873 and ending June 2, 1874, was 30,075, an increase of 3,156 over the previous year. The circulation for the year previous to October 1872 totaled 9,753; again it is difficult to determine just what is meant by the past year. After the Library was opened to the public, an almost daily use of the reference books was noted.⁸

Miss Wolcott was quite pleased with the Library's circulation and felt that it was doing as well as the public library in Grand Rapids. This was true, even though the latter city had a population of 16,504 and Kalamazoo, 9,881; furthermore, the Grand Rapids' library was open six days a week and also had a great many more books from which the patrons could draw. Its weekly circulation was 1,200 and Kalamazoo's, which at that time was open only three days a week, 730.⁹

The greatest need of the Library was a more adequate means of support; the income from penal fines was not sufficient. In 1874 only \$612.48 was spent for books, which was less than the preceding year, since, as Miss Wolcott pointed out, the Library had lost the "dog tax." During the year 438 books were bought and twenty-five were donated, making a total of 3,827. ~~books in the Library.~~ In March the Board authorized the Committee on Library to spend \$500 for books; this authorization was later amended to \$600 and when the amendment was put to vote, there were two Board members in favor and two against the increase. The president, however, voted in favor of the increase.¹⁰

By 1874 the work ~~of the Library~~ had become too heavy for one person and the librarian asked for an assistant. The Board granted her request and Miss Isabella C. Roberts was appointed assistant librarian, the inauspicious beginning of over fifty years of faithful and devoted service to the Kalamazoo Public Library.

The type of book that was placed in the collection of the library was a matter of grave concern to the librarians of that day. Many books were being published that were not considered fit to be read. In the spring of 1875 the Telegraph observed that

There never was a time when stronger efforts were made to prevent the circulation of immoral publications, and there never was a time when such publications were so common all over the country.¹¹

What would the good editor say today!

As new books were being purchased, the librarian was desirous that these new purchases should reflect the needs and wishes of the patrons ~~of the Library~~, and the following notice was printed in the paper: "If there is any book or books you wish added to the District Library, give title of the same to Miss Wolcott, the Librarian." Book selection was done by her and the Library Committee.

Miss Wolcott was concerned not only that the Library would have the books that its patrons wanted to read, but like other librarians of that day, she was delighted that along with the increase in circulation, there was also an increasing demand for books of a good and useful character--books of travel and science in particular.¹²

In the summer of 1873, the Library asked for a donation of pictures. How many pictures were donated, or if there were any, is not known, but this request marks the beginning of ~~the Library's~~ *its* interest in non-book materials.¹³

At the July 6, 1875 meeting of the Board, the librarian submitted her resignation, to become effective September 1, because she felt that she would be unable to give her entire ^{time} to the Library as she had been doing. The signature to the resignation gave the reason for her inability, for it was signed Mrs. J. W. Kent.

In her final report ~~to the Board~~, Mrs. Kent summarized the accomplishments for the past three years and outlined the future needs of the Library. She reported that during the three years that she ^{had been in charge} ~~was with the Library~~, 102,719 books had been loaned and 1,468 books added to the collection. Fines were an important part of a library's economy and they are mentioned in many librarians' reports, and this one is no exception. Mrs. Kent reported that

\$467.55 had been collected in fines, a not inconsiderable sum, considering the size of the Library.

Speaking of the needs of the Library, she noted that more shelf room would be needed soon; the reading room was uncomfortably crowded; and a room devoted to "books of reference" was much needed. The laboring people, she went on to say, found the present hours too limited and the books they borrowed were often taken to the anvil and forge, to the detriment of the books. If ^{it} the library could be open every evening, even if just for an hour, this problem might be corrected in a large measure, but "The privilege should be restricted to those who from their own business hours, are debarred from attending any other hours."

Mrs. Kent also had something to say concerning the books that should be purchased ~~for the library~~. She said:

We believe that the largest part of our public funds should be expended for books of permanent value, and the welcome the books already purchased have met with prove that the public sentiment will sustain us in the belief. We are gratified to note the falling off there has been in the past year in the reading of sensational novels, and to observe so many books of wild adventure left upon the shelf at the close of the week, while better books have gone to supply their places. ¹⁴

At the close of her final report, Mrs Kent bade a fond farewell to the Library.

Although the Board did on occasion commend the services of a retiring superintendent of schools, there is not one word of appreciation for Mrs. Kent's services recorded in its minutes. This was left for the Daily Telegraph to do.

All who are interested in our public library will be sorry to say good bye to the excellent librarian, Mrs. Kent...

The work has been a labor of love with Mrs. Kent, who had devoted almost her entire time and attention to it from the first; and her management had been marked not only by a thorough knowledge and appreciation of the best publications of the day, but by an unvarying courtesy which has always made the library room a pleasant place to visit...

Our consolation for her loss is found in the excellent successor upon whom her mantle has fallen...¹⁵

Although Mrs. Kent served less than three years as librarian, the Kalamazoo Public Library owes much to her; for it was her vision that made it possible for a little school district library to begin its development as an important public and school library system. She lived until February 1920, and had the privilege of seeing it grow from a collection of less than 3,000 volumes, housed in two small closets, to one of 50,000 to 60,000 volumes in a beautiful building of its own.¹⁶

II

On August 3 Isabella C. Roberts, Mrs. Kent's assistant, was appointed librarian; the Board gave her a tentative appointment and put her on probation for three months. Her salary was set at \$250 a year, \$50 less than her predecessor's.¹⁷

During these early years the number of books in the Library was still pitifully small, but in 1873 a step was taken that made more books available to its patrons. In the spring of that year a committee from the Young Men's Library Association appeared before the Board to propose a consolidation of libraries. That body appointed a committee to meet with the Association's group. Although consolidation of the two libraries did not seem immediately feasible, the Association was given permission in June to place its books in the Public Library room under the direction of the Library Committee, and to hold its meetings there. Where room was found for these books is truly a mystery.

Two months later the book collection of the Young Men's Library Association had been carefully arranged and was ready for a more

general public use. Since this library consisted of nearly two thousand volumes, it was indeed a welcome addition to the Public Library and people were able to borrow books that were not in *its collections*. The catalogue of the Association indicates that its library contained some very worthwhile books.

On September 9, 1878, a contract was signed by the Young Men's Library Association and the Board of Education in which the former's library was turned over to the custody of the latter. Plans were also made at this meeting for a public reading room, open all the time, and for making the reference works of the Public Library more readily available.¹⁸

~~Its~~ great need ~~of the Library~~ undoubtedly was a suitable reading room. In the fall of 1878, a subscription paper was drawn up and widely circulated by the Library Committee for the purpose of raising money to defray the expenses of opening and conducting a free reading room in connection with the Library. The proceeds of this subscription and of several entertainments sponsored by the Lotus Club and others, together with the furniture donated by the Rev. J. F. Conover, enabled the Library Committee "to open, furnish, and ornament" a reading room.

About the same time, the Board of Education had "respectfully requested" the Trustees of the Village of Kalamazoo to appropriate for the use of the Board and the Public School Library the two rooms occupied by the Ladies' Library Association, as soon as its lease expired. In December "the commodious rooms in Corporation Hall" were made available to the Library by the village trustees and dedicated and formally opened on December 16.¹⁹

During the dedication exercises H. G. Wells acknowledged various gifts to the Library; among them fine plates of Wilson's

Birds of America and \$100 from the Lotis Club. In his remarks Wells recommended that the available walls of the room and other space be used for such works of art and history as would give the rooms an educating influence. Then followed speeches by ten prominent men of the village. Among them were the Hon. N. A. Balch, the Rev. J. F. Conover, the Rev. W. H. Thomas of the First Congregational Church, William Dewing, President Brooks of Kalamazoo College and Superintendent of Schools George.

In his speech, Brooks emphasized that schools, colleges and universities do not give a complete education; the library must supplement the education provided by these agencies. He also noted that the present movement toward free public libraries was a growing one and one that was destined to make the library attractive and useful to both young and old.

The Rev. Thomas said that libraries were one of the institutions which the leading and more respectable citizens should maintain with as much care as they did the laws, streets and public schools. The Public School Library, he concluded, should be made one of the very best libraries.²⁰

The following year the Library Committee presented the Board with plans for an organization that would function in the interests of the Public Library. The Board approved and the Public Library Alliance was formed. This was the first Friends organization for the Kalamazoo Public Library and probably one of the very first in the nation. The object of the Alliance was to promote the "interest and intelligence of the people in various fields of literature, sciences, mechanic arts,... and collect cabinets in all departments of Natural history."²¹

The Alliance continued in existence for a year or two; it held

periodic meetings, at least one of which was described as being enjoyable. Russia was the topic discussed at another one of its meetings. Of the accomplishments of the Alliance, about all that can be said is that the donations of the Birds of America by Judge Wells and the corals, shells, marbles and fossils by Horace M. Peck could be credited, in part at least, to its influence.

The gifts by Peck in 1880 mark the beginning of the collections of the Kalamazoo Public Museum. Two years later he gave the Public Library and the Ladies' Library Association two fine geological and paleozoic specimens that were rich in fossils. A little later he purchased a collection of pictures of rare birds that he proposed to give to the Library.²²

For some time Dr. Hitchcock had been interested in a museum for Kalamazoo. On August 2, 1876, he made a presentation to the Board outlining his views on this subject. He said:

Kalamazoo is now near the semi-centennial of its settlement. As yet it has no historical society--no archaeological collection, and no museum of natural history, no cabinet illustrating geology or mineralogy.

Its only public library is this school library, whose care and preservation is placed in our hands. Of this library neither we nor the people of the district need be ashamed. It is the beginning and ought to be the foundation of a public library that shall be the pride of our village.

Ought there not be connected with this library in some relation, an historical society with its museum of archaeological relics and curiosities and cabinets in all departments of natural history.

It is thought that there are scattered throughout this county very many such specimens, whose collection and careful preservation would be of interest and use not only to coming generations, but to all, both old and young, who now daily frequent these rooms.

Although the Board of Education is not made by law a creator of cabinet and museum, nor yet authorized to furnish room for such things, I wish respectfully to ask if this public library is not the fittest place for the reception and preservation of all such specimens of historical and scientific interest, and if this Board may not very appropriately appeal to the

citizens of the village and the county for contributions of all such specimens, and very fitly and not illegally offer itself as the careful curator of all such specimens of archaeological and scientific interest? ²³

But sound and practical as these ideas were, they had to wait fifty years for their implementation.

After the Library had been provided with more suitable rooms, its use increased. In her report to the Board on July 6, 1880, Miss Roberts said that its holdings now consisted of 7,000 volumes: 6,323 in the circulation department, 1,442 public documents, and pamphlets and 136 dictionaries and encyclopedias; the circulation for the year was 49,129. Four years earlier she had reported that there were 4,628 books in the Library and the circulation was 32,700. The increase in circulation was outstanding, even though the growth in the book collection was not unusual.

In her report Miss Roberts also noted that twenty-four books had been borrowed and not returned. The list of the delinquents was appended to her report, and the Board instructed the village marshall to call on them and either collect the books or their price. Then she noted that a general and heartfelt interest was being shown in the Library, that the rooms were pleasant and airy, and that the newspapers and magazines in the reading room made it an attractive place in which to spend a leisure hour. Its immediate need, she added, was a complete catalog of its holdings. ²⁴

For nearly ten years Dr. Home O. Hitchcock had been a staunch supporter of the Library, and he had not hesitated to voice his dreams for its future. But at the annual school election of July 6, 1881, he received only thirty-two votes out of a total of 266

cast.

Before Dr. Hitchcock left the Board, he and Thomas S. Cobb, the two members of the Library Committee, made a report to that body on the accomplishments of the past nine years. Among these were the compilation of a library catalogue and the printing of 2,000 copies, a great increase in the number of borrowers and in the number of books in circulation. In the fall of 1872, the report continued, there had been 2,800 usable volumes; on July 6, 1881, there were 8,355, with a circulation of over 40,000; and most of the books that had been purchased during this period had been bought at discounts of twenty-five to forty per cent.

The report concluded by enumerating the needs of the Library if it was to continue to grow. These were the speedy printing of a new catalogue, the manuscript of which was nearly completed, after the Amherst method of classification and numbering; the regular acquisition of the best books; the complete furnishing of the reading room; the speedy gathering of cabinets in all departments of natural history, especially with regard to the relics of the aborigines of Michigan and the Northwest; the appointment of a suitable person as curator of the museum; and, above all, a plan for a "permanent abiding place for the Library and Museum in the shape of a fire-proof building that shall be an ornament and credit to Kalamazoo." 25

The vision of the Library Committee, and especially that of Dr. Hitchcock, was remarkable. The pity is that so many of his ideas had to wait for so many years before they saw their fulfillment.

During 1880 and 1881 the books of the Library were classified according to the Amherst system, as was mentioned in the report of the Library Committee. The Dewey Decimal Classification was

originally known as the Amherst system because Melvil Dewey began its development while he was at Amherst College. Miss Roberts had concluded that this system was the best when the present and future of the Library were taken into account. It would allow, she said, unlimited addition and the location of the books could be changed as the ^{collection} ~~library~~ grew without affecting the classification.²⁶

Through the years librarians have wondered if their services were really appreciated and if they and the libraries they manned would be missed if they should suddenly vanish. Possibly the librarians of a century ago had these same concerns. Therefore it is gratifying to read an occasional statement of appreciation. During the summer of 1884, the Library was closed for a period of time--the reason for its closing is not stated, and when the doors were unlocked on September 1, many people, according to the Telegraph, were delighted. The paper commended the Board for raising the salaries of Miss Roberts and her assistant. The former was described as being a most competent, faithful and attentive librarian, accommodating to all and ever ready to please the patrons of the Library. Of both her and her assistant, Miss McKee, it was said, "These excellent public servants are appreciated in this community."

Of the Library itself, it was reported:

The public interest in this institution is great and all the time, increasing, and we know of no department in the city as popular and as highly appreciated. Every afternoon of the week, except Sunday, the tables of the reading room are thronged by young people, especially after school hours, the older readers having possession before that time.²⁷

And if the writer of these words could see the reading rooms of the Kalamazoo Public Library today, he would still find them thronged with young people.

The librarians of that day were greatly concerned over the books that ^{their} ~~the~~ patrons were ~~reading~~, read, especially the young

people. In her annual report of 1881/82, Miss Roberts made some interesting observations on what she regarded as suitable reading for young people. She wrote:

As an educator, especially in connection with the schools of the village it (the Library) is proving to be of almost inestimable value. The only thing to be seriously regretted is the extent to which the better class of reading is neglected for the mere light and ephemeral works, but this failing we share with all the libraries of the land. The question how shall we get our young people to read really good books has occupied the attention of many of the best minds of the country but as yet it has proved to a great extent to be an unsolved problem. Books of history and travel for children are made so attractive nowadays, that few boys or girls can resist them, but the tendency to excessive novel reading among young people 16 years of age and upward is greater than could be wished. To try and keep from the library books that are positively harmful and to buy only the best class of fiction, as far as may be, seems to be all that can be done at the present...

A year later she made this observation:

Though the much discussed novel plays a more important part in our work than is desirable, yet when one thinks of the weary worker refreshed, and the lagging hours in the sick room, we cannot wholly regret its presence, though if it took a less prominent place in the reading of many it would be desirable.²⁸

By 1885 the Kalamazoo Public Library was one of the largest free libraries in Michigan. Its holdings consisted of more than 10,000 volumes and the circulation during the winters months was between three and four thousand a month. The Library was now beginning to receive gifts of books. Early in 1884, J. C. Burrows, representative from the Kalamazoo Congressional District gave it ten volumes of the History of the War of Rebellion, the remainder of the seventy-five volumes in the set to be presented as fast as issued.²⁹

III

Although the story of the Library was one of steady growth and increasing popularity, it was soon to face a serious crisis. In the fall of 1884, the City government demanded its rooms

~~occupied by the Library~~, intending to use them for the police court. The Board of Education tried, but unsuccessfully, to effect a compromise with the City Council. On October 7 the Board authorized the Committee on Library and Textbooks to act upon the matter of renting suitable rooms for the Public Library, the reading room and Board meetings. Five weeks later it was voted to remove the library from Corporation Hall to some convenient room as soon as practical in accordance with the demands of the City Council.³⁰

Early in January the Committee reported in favor of renting the second floor of the A. C. Wortley store at an annual rental of \$300 and the three south rooms of the store of Mrs. Mary H. Britt at \$100 a year. The Wortley building was the one so long occupied by the George W. Taylor's Men's Store. In 1885 its number was 121 West Main, and until it was torn down in recent years, the building was designated as 135-141 West Michigan.³¹

Moving the Library to the Wortley building began on January 13 and was completed by the 19th. Miss Roberts recalled many years later that

This flitting was one long to be remembered by the librarians in charge. The same book cases that had served in the old quarters were to be used in the new ones. One morning, without warning, men appeared on the scene to remove the cases. The books had to be hastily taken from the shelves, with no time to keep the classes together, and later they were carried to the new quarters in baskets and dumped upon the floor. The two transfers had so effectually mixed them up that it is safe to say scarcely two books of the same class were together. However, after strenuous exertions, order was brought out of chaos, and the books were once more arranged on the shelves in classes as of yore.³²

Although the rooms over the Wortley store afforded sufficient space and were convenient to the public, they were poorly suited for a library, being both ~~inadequately~~ ^{inadequately} ventilated and lighted. They were, however, also described as being very nice.³³

Evidently some of the library patrons became restive when the

Library was closed for several weeks, for the Telegraph reminded them on January 24 that Miss Roberts and Miss McKee were doing the best they could to hurry up the work of replacing the books on the new shelves, but that to receive and dust 12,000 volumes, classify and place them on the shelves took time.³⁴

When the Library reopened, crowds of people frequented it, especially after school hours; the librarians did their best, but were unable to give the books out fast enough. Shortly after the move to the Wortley building had been completed, the editor of the Daily Telegraph commented: "The importance of the place that it fills increases each year, and I think that its loss would be felt only second to that of the public schools themselves." By late fall the new quarters were crowded every afternoon by young people looking for books. The reading room was also well patronized and the reference department, which was described as a full and excellent one, was much used. Perhaps the fact that the Wortley building was steam heated encouraged use of the Library.³⁵

Financial support of the Library was increasing, so that the additions to its collection could be described as "very large." In July 1887 its holdings comprised 13,620 volumes, 10,611 of them circulating, 264 reference volumes and 2,745 government documents, which had been rearranged and classified in the winter of 1886. Accessions during the past year had totaled 1,200 and \$1,075 was spent for books and \$165 for magazines. Two hundred volumes of magazines had been bound, and the acquisition of a nearly complete set of the North American Review from 1815 on was also gratifying to the librarians. A copy of Poole's index to periodical literature, which opened up to the reader the great amount of information contained in magazines and reviews, was purchased at this time.³⁶

The Library continued to receive gifts of various kinds. Judge Powers gave it a very valuable collection of minerals; Mrs. A. T. Prouty, eighty-five years old, who had eighty-four volumes of scrapbooks, contributed several volumes containing local history; and in 1888 the heirs of A. T. Prouty gave a number of valuable books.³⁷

In her 1887/88 annual report, Miss Roberts unburdened herself on two problems, which were disturbing her, problems which are still very ^{much} with the modern librarian. These were the lack of adequate space and book losses. On the problem of book losses she said:

Some system of greater protection for the books borrowed from the library is much needed, for we lose more books in a year than many libraries with double or even treble our circulation, and as each year more valuable books are placed upon our shelves, some greater safeguard should be placed around them. We are constantly losing books from having persons leave the city, and either carelessly or intentionally neglected to return to the library the books they have borrowed.³⁸

~~The Library had lost~~ ^{had been lost} Twenty-two volumes during the past year, and Miss Roberts recommended that persons who wanted to borrow books be required to furnish a guarantor or surety for their safe return.

By this time a new catalog ~~of the books in the Library~~ was urgently needed. Early in February the Board authorized the librarian to prepare ~~ones~~ ^{one} and stipulated that her assistant be allowed extra compensation for the additional time necessary for its preparation. In her annual report of 1888/89, Miss Roberts stated that a complete catalogue of all the books in the Library, with the exception of the public documents, had been prepared and was ready to be placed in the hands of the printer. Evidently the card catalogue had not yet been adopted.³⁹

At least a few people in Kalamazoo felt that the librarian was woefully underpaid. In October 1884, Frank Little and six other

men signed a petition asking the Board of Education to raise the librarian's salary to \$400 a year. This petition was referred to the Committee on Library and Textbooks, which recommended a salary of \$336 for the librarian and \$200 for her assistant. Two years later these salaries were raised to \$360 and \$250 respectively; \$360 was just a little more than the salary of a beginning teacher in the Kalamazoo school system. Not until July 1, 1889, did the Board vote to increase Miss Roberts' salary to \$40 a month and that of her assistant to \$30.⁴⁰

IV

By the beginning of 1890, it was becoming obvious that if the Library was to continue to grow and expand its services, more room was a pressing need. On May 19, 1890, the Committee on Library and Textbooks recommended the renting of rooms for the Public Library in the building soon to be erected by the Young Men's Christian Association, at an annual rental of \$1,200 for a term of five years. After considerable discussion, the Board voted to postpone consideration of this recommendation until its first meeting after the annual school meeting.

Two weeks later William Shakespeare proposed to furnish room for the Library. His proposition was also deferred until after the annual school meeting. A little earlier a J. C. Goodale had offered to build a business block on South Burdick, opposite the proposed post office. If, he said, the Board of Education would place the Library in his building, he would devote the entire first floor to its use.⁴¹

On July 9 the Telegraph published an announcement that evidently was the reason for the Board's postponing consideration of the proposals that had been made to it a few weeks previously. The paper reported:

A proposition has been made to the board of education by liberal public spirited parties in the city, that if a suitable site is furnished by the district, a sufficient sum of money will be furnished by them to erect a good library building. The Telegraph is not at liberty to give further facts, but it is understood that the sum will not be less than \$50,000. The parties who make the above liberal offer are modest, unassuming people and they are averse to an extended notice being made of the proposition.⁴²

The annual school meeting held on July 16 was an exciting and somewhat disorderly one. There were six candidates for the two vacancies on the Board and the budget for the coming year was estimated at \$34,612. During the discussion at the meeting, Alexander Cameron, a pioneer builder of Kalamazoo, asked what salary was being paid the superintendent of schools and was told that it was \$2,200. Cameron then compared the salary of the superintendent with that paid the librarian and her assistants, which amounted to \$912, and asked what in the name of justice that meant. A long argument then ensued and for a time "the greatest disorder prevailed." A number of men got into a wrangle and sharp words were exchanged. During the argument, "the following loving phrases," as the Telegraph put it, "were uttered":

Don't close our mouths, when you are going to put your hands in our pockets this fall.

Go on, Mr. Hubbard! There is a class of robbers here.

I don't like the choking off of a man's speech on these important matters.

Cameron then moved to raise the salary of the librarian and her assistants to \$1,000, and Heber C. Reed proposed an amendment raising the amount to \$1,200. Both the motion and its amendment were carried and adopted.

The ill will and wrangling came to a halt when Henry E. Hoyt, secretary of the Board of Education, announced in the afternoon the offer of an unknown individual to furnish and donate the school district the sum of \$50,000 to be used in the erection of a

suitable library building and reading room and rooms for the meetings of the Board of Education, with the stipulation that the school district furnish a satisfactory site for such a building. Whereupon the electors voted unanimously that the Board be authorized to spend \$15,000 for such a site.

After this action the people demanded that the name of the generous party be made public. When they were told that Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Van Deusen were the ones who had made the offer, "A vote of thanks," made on the motion of Dr. Pratt, "was unanimously and vociferously awarded Doctor and Mrs. Van Deusen for their munificent bequest."⁴³

Nearly sixty years later Mary French Haines told the story of how Dr. Van Deusen supposedly got the idea of giving money for a new library. On October 16, 1947, she wrote the following account:

Dr. Vandausen and Henry N. French, superintendent of schools, stood on the corner of Rose and S. Streets and soon before they separated, Dr. Vandausen said to Mr. French, "We are returning to our home in the east--and we leave soon, and it is our wish to leave a gift to Kalamazoo where we have spent so many happy years. What would you suggest?" Mr. French said, "We do want a library." Dr. said, "I think that would please my wife, and I will let you know tomorrow." When my father came in he said to my mother, "H---, I think that we are going to get our library." He was very jubilant. This personal touch I am glad to give at this time, and the speech my father gave at the time it was accepted by the Board of Education.⁴⁴

Soon a special committee was appointed by the Board to secure a site for the proposed library building and on August 5 the committee reported that the lot on the corner of South Rose and South Streets, belonging to Robert R. Howard, could be purchased for \$16,000, which was a thousand dollars more than the Board was authorized to spend. It seems that the owners of the lot had originally asked \$15,000, but had later raised the price to \$16,000. Hoyt then said that the extra thousand dollars would have to be

raised by private subscription. This was done very quickly by a group of private citizens, the list of which is still in the Library's local history collection. The first subscriber gave \$200 and said that the committee should come back to him if it took too much effort to raise the remaining \$800. The contributors were later reimbursed by the Board.⁴⁵

The house that stood on the Howard lot was an old landmark. It was originally built by Lot North, but soon passed into the hands of H. H. Comstock and Gen. Justus Burdick lived there for a while. About 1840 Henry E. Hoyt's father and his family moved into it. At this time the lot was surrounded by a primitive rail fence and extended to Lovell Street; the house was one of the most pretentious in Kalamazoo. Around 1848 the property was bought by Francis and William Dennison, who divided it, and in the early 1860's, it was bought by Robert Howard for \$1,400. Just south of the Howard property stood the home of H. Gilbert, which was described in the 1880's as one of the prettiest places in Kalamazoo. This site seems to have been Dr. Van Deusen's personal choice.⁴⁶

After the Howard property was purchased, Van Deusen sent the following formal note to the Board of Education:

We propose to place at your disposal the sum of \$50,000 for the erection of a Public Library Building to be located on the Howard Lot and to be forever used and maintained as a Public Library and Reading room. Under the control of its Board of Education of School District number one of the city and township of Kalamazoo.⁴⁷

In a letter to the Board, written on September 6, 1890, he indicated his wishes for the new library building in some detail. The one condition of his offer was that a commodious room with a small office attached, "located and arranged satisfactorily to us, shall be permanently set apart for the exclusive use of the 'Kalamazoo Academy of Medicine.'" He further stated that the

Board of Education should select the architect and have entire charge of preparing plans and specifications, letting contracts and superintendence.

Then he went on to say, "Directly chosen by our citizens for most important and responsible duties, we find pleasure in committing to you the erection of this building and do so with entire confidence." 48

Although in his letter Dr. Van Deusen disclaimed any intention of forcing his ideas on the Board, he did express his wishes on several points. He hoped that special attention would be given to the public reading rooms, so that all who would use these rooms would find the same opportunities, comforts and conveniences as were found in the private clubs of the city. He also expressed the wish that the exterior of the building be in harmony with and an expression of its purposes, though, he went on to say, he regarded an expenditure for merely architectural effect as being unwise, and he pled for sound construction.

In October the matter of securing plans for the new library was placed in the hands of the Committee on Grounds and Buildings; by early March a large number of sketches and plans for the building were placed in the rooms of the Board where they could be seen by interested people. The plan of Patton and Fisher of Chicago called for a large three-story building of pressed stone, having the appearance of a city hall; the plan submitted by Fallas of Toledo, which seemed to have been the favorite of both the Board and Dr. Van Deusen, specified a building whose dimensions were 135 by 125 feet and a design that was described as being remarkably beautiful and new, but the vast amount of roof surface that the plan asked for was regarded as a serious objection. On March 20, 1891, the Board accepted the plans developed by Patton and Fisher and in

April the building committee was authorized to execute a contract with the firm.⁴⁹

V

The bids for the new library building were opened on July 18, 1891; they ranged from \$77,000 down to \$45,992. The low bid was submitted by U. D. Wheaton of Kalamazoo and the contract was awarded to him. His bid did not include plumbing, lighting, furniture and mantels.⁵⁰

In her annual report of 1890/91, Miss Roberts expressed the feelings and hopes of the library staff and undoubtedly that of many of the residents of Kalamazoo. She said:

I need scarcely say, with what bright anticipations we are all ~~and~~ looking forward to the completion of the new library building, with its commodious book room, and pleasant reading and reference rooms, and we sincerely hope that, with added facilities for work in its departments, the usefulness of the library may be largely increased, and around it may center a great educational work that shall be manifested in the increased intelligence of all our people.⁵¹

The construction of the library, which began in the summer of 1891, was not entirely uneventful; the old records enumerate the usual difficulties connected with the construction of a large building. Early in February 1892 the work was delayed by the inability of the contractors to procure the tile for the roof. The furniture supplier complained that the space which the library furniture occupied was badly needed for new stock and that, if the Board of Education was still unable to accept delivery, the supplier should at least be paid interest on the unpaid balance. The contractor's complaint is that he is losing money, and the architects point out that they are making very little commission on the project because they had to make two sets of drawings and for that reason would like to have their accounts settled quickly.⁵²

For some reason or other there was considerable delay in the

settling of the final accounts. As late as the spring of 1894, we find the architects pleading with the Board for payment of their services. The records, however, do not indicate the reasons for these delays.⁵³

The library building was completed in the spring of 1893; it was regarded as a fine example of Richardsonian Romanesque. It was also noted for its stained glass windows. The correspondence between Edward J. N. Stent, decorative architect in New York City, and Henry E. Hoyt and Dr. Van Deusen clearly indicated the latter's ^{interest} in and concern for the interior of the building. Eleven cases of glass were sent to Kalamazoo for use in the Van Deusen Library. A letter, dated August 1, 1893, states that the stained glass cost \$1,686, not including ^{that the} ~~cost~~ of "Decoration." It is not clear that this glass was part of the general contract.

The total cost of the building, including furniture and fixtures which amounted to \$5,530.81, was \$53,852. Some writers have asserted that the Van Deusens spent close to \$75,000 ^{on} ~~and~~ the new library; but this is not at all clear from the available records, though it is probably true that they spent more than the \$50,000 they had originally promised.

Undoubtedly the library in the Wortley Building continued to be patronized while the new ^{building} ~~library~~ was under construction, but little was said concerning its activities. Perhaps the biggest news was the announcement in July 1890 that the new catalogs were out and could be purchased for fifty cents; a paper copy of the fiction and juvenile works could be had for fifteen cents. The complete catalogs were bound in cloth and contained 274 pages. This was also the time that the first volumes of the new American reprint of the Encyclopaedia Britannica began appearing in Kalamazoo.

The price for the entire set of twenty-five volumes was \$36.⁵⁴

The Library was moved from the Wortley Building to the new building during the months of April and May in 1893; the Board met for the first time "at the new and elegant rooms in the new library building" on May 3. There was no formal opening, for the Van Deusens did not desire it, the doctor having written the Board nearly three years earlier, "... anything in the way of 'appreciation etc.' we would prefer omitted." He, however, found great pleasure and satisfaction in the building and the use the people were making of it.

On May 11 the Daily Telegraph reported that the books in the new library were all in position and numbered 17,800 volumes. It had taken four weeks to remove the books from the old building and place them in order. The information was also given that Miss Roberts was busily engaged in making a new register and issuing new cards, but that she had been somewhat delayed in her work, so that ~~possible~~ only the first half of the alphabet would be ready to give out by Monday. Assurance was given, however, that the rooms would be open Saturday afternoon and evening.⁵⁵

The Gazette reported on Sunday, May 14, that "The Van Deusen library was opened last evening to the public. It was brilliantly illuminated and made a most imposing spectacle. The interior is certainly a gem of art and the hundreds who visited the building last evening so expressed themselves." On the previous day the Telegraph noted that a number of ladies and gentlemen had visited the new library and that many expressions of admiration had been heard.⁵⁶

And a new library must have at least one new rule; on Monday the Telegraph informed its users ~~of the Library:~~

In order that the best results may be obtained from the use of the building the rule has been made that there shall be no talking allowed in either room. This rule must be observed by all, old and young alike.⁵⁷

Miss Roberts expressed her satisfaction in the new building in the following words:

"The beginning of the library year found us fairly well settled in our beautiful new building, and the year has been a very prosperous one in all departments of its work. The extent to which both the library and reading room has been used shows how greatly the citizens of our fair city appreciate Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Van Deusen's generous gift."⁵⁸

At the annual school meeting, held on June 5, the people of Kalamazoo voiced their appreciation and gratitude in a preamble and resolution, which was adopted by a rising vote:

Your board of education, not only in its personal sentiment, but also in its representative capacity, deems it especially fitting on this, our first annual meeting after the completion of a magnificent library building, the generously munificent gift of a private citizen and his estimable wife to the public and to posterity, to submit the following as worthy of our unanimous approval and adoption:

....

Resolved, That we, the immediate recipients of this unselfish and noble benefaction, do most gratefully acknowledge the depth of thanks we owe the donors, and at the same time regret the inadequacy of words to fully express this thankfulness.

Resolved, That as 'libraries are the shrines where relics of the ancient saints, full of true virtue, and that without delusion or imposture, are preserved and reposed,' so this building shall serve to keep fragrant the memory of our benefactors and will be to them a monument more eloquent than marble, 'more enduring than bronze'...⁵⁹

About two months later "a very elegant bronze tablet resting upon a background of oak" was placed unbeknown at the time to Dr. and Mrs. Van Deusen, at the right of the entrance to the delivery room of the Library. The inscription on the tablet read: "This building is the gift of Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Van Deusen to the citizens of Kalamazoo, A. D. 1893."⁶⁰

During June a beautiful New York blue stone carriage block

was placed in front of the Library, both the cartage and placing of the stone being free.⁶¹

The people of Kalamazoo were grateful to the Van Deusens and proud of the beautiful library building that their generosity had made possible, and well they might be. For nearly sixty-five years this building served their school district and city and made possible the development of an important library and the realization of an outstanding library service.

VI

Although the Kalamazoo Public Library was the largest and most important, there were other important libraries in the city.

The library of the Ladies ' Library Association was still the most prestigious, even though its importance was waning. During the 1880's it received more newspaper publicity than the Public Library. In 1874 it had 2,438 volumes in its collection and a total circulation of 3,692; ten years later its holdings had increased to 3,158, but the circulation had dropped to 533. By the beginning of 1898, the circulation had declined to 329, even though there were nearly four thousand books in the library.⁶²

The really significant achievement of the Association was its new building. Early in 1878 the organization began the gathering of funds for this project, and by the beginning of August of the same year, the plans and specifications for the building had been adopted. If the plans were followed, the Telegraph reported, the building would be "the toniest tabernacle in town, and one we may all be proud of."⁶³

The cost of the structure was \$9,371.09, of which \$2,675 had not been raised when the building was opened on May 20, 1879. But this indebtedness was liquidated by friends of the Association in a little more than three years. Volney Hascall left the

organization a legacy of \$500. Besides money, a fairly large amount of articles, art objects and books were also donated; Samuel York Atlee, a Kalamazoo pioneer who had lived in Washington, D. C. for a number of years, gave a volume of autographs and autograph letters that he had compiled.⁶⁴

The Ladies' Library Association building was the first to be built for a women's organization in the United States, and Kalamazoo was proud of it. Although it looks very dated today, to the people of the 1880's it was beautiful with the light shining through the stained glass windows which reached to the tower. On Sunday, October 17, 1971,th building was publicly dedicated as a National Historic Landmark during an open house and tea. More than two hundred people attended the event which launched the public aspect of the Association's "National Historic Year."⁶⁵

Another one of Kalamazoo's libraries was that of the Mechanics Institute. In 1884 it had 425 volumes on scientific and mechanical subjects and a year later Congressman J. C. Burrows presented 408 volumes to the library, all bound in sheep. Then in 1887 Mrs. H. G. Wells donated two hundred volumes and many pamphlets and maps. By this time the ~~library's~~^{its} holdings totaled nearly a thousand volumes, besides many pamphlets and patent gazettes.⁶⁶

The County Library was another special library in the city. It seems to have been primarily a law library; for in 1882 eight volumes of Jacobs-Fisher's digest of English reports were bought at the request of Judge Mills. A year later the County Board of Supervisors voted \$150 for the purchase of books ~~for this library~~ and in 1895 and again in 1898, \$200 was appropriated for the same purpose. The library was given a special room in the new court house and the books were placed in handsome cherry cases. It was also planned at this time to index the books and publish a catalog.⁶⁷

There were at least three Sunday School libraries in the city. In 1882 the paper reported that the Sunday School of the First Congregational Church was to have a new library and that O. M. Allen had given \$250 for this project. Four years later it was reported that the library of the First Baptist Church consisted of 374 books and fifty-three primary works and that it had a printed catalog. A year earlier the Methodist Episcopal Church had received a large installment of new and valuable books.⁶⁸

In 1888 Congressman Burrows donated twenty-one public documents to St. Augustine's school library, which seems to indicate that there was at least one parochial school library in Kalamazoo.⁶⁹

Nothing much is known of the libraries in Kalamazoo College and the Female Seminary, with the exception of the statement that the Seminary library comprised 1,350 volumes in 1887.⁷⁰

A noteworthy library endeavor of the 1870's was the project for the State Prison Library promoted by Mrs. Agnes D'Arcambul, whose husband had been a prominent druggist in Kalamazoo for many years. In January 1873 she presented a ^{collection of books} library to the prisoners, but continued her efforts and in July was able to take nearly two ^{more} thousand books and pamphlets to the prison library. The Michigan Central Railroad permitted her to ride free and the express companies carried the books to Lansing without charge. Mrs. D'Arcambul also addressed both houses of the Legislature, asking its members to contribute to the State Prison Library which she had established.⁷¹

Mrs. D'Arcambul was a remarkable woman and one deeply interested in the rehabilitation of the criminal. In the late 1880's she founded a Home of Industry in Detroit for ex-convicts. The home consisted of a broom and rug factory, a chair-caning department, a kitchen and dining room and a large general rooms for

reading and devotion. She died in Detroit on February 13, 1899.⁷²

VII

As far as the State of Michigan was concerned, not too much progress was made in the establishment of public libraries, even though the Legislature passed a law in 1877 entitled "An Act to Authorize Cities, incorporated Villages, and Townships to Establish and Maintain Free Public Libraries and Reading Rooms."¹ This law provided for city, town and village libraries under the control of a board of directors nominated by the mayor and approved by the council, and permitted the levying of a certain specified tax. This law, however, met with very moderate response before the close of the century. Still it is true that Michigan was among the earlier of the mid-western states to pass a free public library law. Another mark of progress in the State was the decision in 1880 that it was lawful to use tax money for the purchase of books for public libraries.⁷³

The Grand Rapids Public Library had its actual genesis during the 1870's. In 1871 the consolidation of the three Grand Rapids public schools and their combined libraries, augmented by the libraries of the Grand Rapids Library Association, the Ladies' Library Association and the Young Men's Christian Association, resulted in the formation of the Grand Rapids Public Library under the control of the school board. Then in 1903 an act of the State Legislature created a Board of Library Commissioners for the administration of the library, the title of the property, however, remaining with the school board. Henry J. Carr, well-known and beloved in the American Library Association, was the librarian from 1886 to 1890.⁷⁴

The largest public library in Michigan was that of Detroit.

By the end of 1877, there were more than 37,000 volumes in the library, which number had grown to 70,550 nine years later, with a circulation of over 167,000.

The Detroit Public Library adopted Melvil Dewey's Decimal System, or "relative" system, in 1880, the same year that the Kalamazoo Public Library did. Reclassifying the collection took nearly ten years, and when this project was completed, a general catalogue was compiled, which consisted of 1,113 pages and was considered to be the best example of cataloging according to the decimal system.

By this time the Detroit Board of Education no longer had the confidence of the public, many of whom felt that the library would be better off if it were separated from the board of education. Consequently, a library commission, severed from its control, was created.⁷⁵

The year 1891 saw the formation of the Michigan Library Association. Henry M. Utley, librarian of the Detroit Public Library from 1885-1892, and Miss Mary E. Eddy of the Coldwater Public Library were the leaders in the organization of the association. The first meeting, held in Detroit on September 1, 1891, was attended by thirty-seven librarians, representing twenty-two libraries. Utley was chosen the first president of the organization. For nearly a decade, the Michigan Library Association strove, though almost vainly, for an annual attendance of fifty. Its fifth annual meeting was held in Kalamazoo. The Michigan association was ninth on the list of state library associations, a fair indication that Michigan was not alone in wanting aggressive leadership in behalf of libraries and librarianship.⁷⁶

Nationally, this period saw significant developments in the field of librarianship. In 1876 the American Library Association

was founded, one of its founders being Melvil Dewey. Dewey also began the Library Journal that same year and was its first editor. By this time he had sufficiently improved or refined his system of library classification, so that it now became practical for library catalogs. . Seven years later Dewey founded the first library school in the nation at Columbia University.

Chapter 9

KALAMAZOO: 1894-1910

The Kalamazoo of the last years of the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth was a city that was becoming increasingly aware of the problems of a growing urban and technological society.

I

In 1897 the city could boast of a population of nearly 25,000. The value of its taxable property was well over \$8,000,000 and the total bank clearings for the year exceeded \$14,000,000, an increase of better than \$300,000 over the previous year.

Among its businesses and industries, it numbered 230 mercantile houses, sixty-five factories, with 3,800 employees, seven banking institutions, two electric light systems, two gas companies, the largest essential oil refinery in the world, and probably the greatest celery acreage and investment. But business was not the city's only boast: among its other assets it counted twenty-five church buildings, the "finest public library building in Michigan," two hospitals and a sanitarium, a children's home, a humane society, a home for erring girls, and industrial school home, three daily, one tri-weekly, two semi-weekly, and four weekly newspapers.¹

The paper industry, which was to become such a dominant factor

in Kalamazoo's economy, began to expand rapidly after 1900. For over thirty years the Kalamazoo Paper Company was the only paper mill in the city. The second one, the Bryant Paper Company, was organized in 1894 or 1895. By the summer of 1901, there were six paper mills in the city, with a combined total investment of over \$750,000 and a yearly business of near \$2,000,000. The paper industry employed over a thousand men and its weekly payroll was \$7,500. The industry was a profitable one, for yearly dividends of twenty-five percent were reported. ²

The manufacturing of windmills was another flourishing business. In February 1901 the Williams Manufacturing Company had orders for three carloads of windmills for Honolulu, one for Puerto Rico, and a shipment of tanks for England. The cutting and storing of ice during the winter months was also big business. In the winter of 1894, A. M. Todd had over a hundred men and teams making ice at his lake near Nottawa at the rate of a thousand tons a day. A few years later the paper reported that the Kalamazoo Ice Company had 18,000 tons of ice. ²

The words "Kalamazoo Direct to You" were for many years the only knowledge that most Americans had of Kalamazoo. This was the slogan of the Kalamazoo Stove Company, organized in 1901, which for over forty years sold its products ^{directly} to the consumer. The Yonkerman Chemical Company, also founded in 1901, was another infant enterprise. This company planned to market the new tuberculozyne, an "antitoxine" to cure consumption, developed by Dr. D. P. Yonkerman, a well-known Kalamazoo veterinarian. William Shakespeare, Jr. was its secretary-treasurer, and the company was located in the new Shakespeare building on the northeast corner of Rose and Water Streets. ⁴

It is not known how long the firm remained in business, but

the remedy which it sold and which it was fondly hoped would be a "specific" for tuberculosis, went the way of other purported cures for certain dread diseases, including the cancer cures of a later day.

In 1899 the Kalamazoo Corset Factory, later known as the Grace Corset Company, bought land adjacent to its factory on North Church Street--six lots on Eleanor Street and two on Church. The building in which the Public Library had its temporary quarters in 1958/59 stands on this property.⁵

Not all businesses and industries, however, were able to meet the competition of modern technology. In 1900 Cornell and Company, organized in 1847 as the Cornell Carriage Company, and a maker of fine custom-made carriages, went out of business. The high cost of producing these carriages was the chief cause for its failure. The company had had the first, or one of the first, brick factories in the village and its fine product had made Kalamazoo famous. The firm was bought by the Puritan Corset Company and the large buffalo head that had hung in its office for many years was given to the Public Library.⁶

The telephone industry was a rapidly growing one. Perhaps the first telephone directory issued in Kalamazoo was that of the Kalamazoo Mutual Company in the fall of 1898. This directory listed seven hundred names, one hundred of which were new subscribers, including those at Otsego, Plainwell, and other nearby localities. On July 25, 1899, telephone service between Detroit and Kalamazoo went into operation, the line being built by the Michigan Telephone Company, a subsidiary of the Bell System.⁷

Another indicator of business conditions in the city were the five railroads that handled thirty passenger trains and one

hundred fifty tons of freight daily.

Some of the names that are still familiar in Kalamazoo today were already part of its business scene in 1900. A few of them were mentioned in a previous chapter. The Bell Shoe Store was already well established and likewise Rosenbaum's and the Kalamazoo Laundry Company. The name of Van Bochove was well known in the nursery business.

III

Transportation and street conditions within the city were also being improved. Although almost everyone agreed that the paving of the streets was highly desirable, there were those who felt that the city did not have the right to levy assessments for these improvements. Early in 1898, however, the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that the city did have that right, and the city attorney immediately proceeded to collect \$14,000 or more in delinquent taxes. Soon decisive steps were taken to pave the streets of Kalamazoo and in the fall of the same year, the paving of East Main was completed, the occasion being celebrated with music and a grand display of fireworks. East Main and other streets had been paved before this, but with wooden blocks; now the paving was brick. But for several years the street paving was considered by some to be inadequate, especially on West Main and South West Streets. As the Telegraph put it cynically, "There are no snakes in Ireland! There are no street pavements in Kalamazoo."⁸

In spite of setbacks and financial difficulties, street car service continued to improve. People were interested not only in better service within the city, but also in the possibility of using the electric railroad to connect Kalamazoo with nearby cities like Battle Creek and Grand Rapids. Work on the Battle Creek and Grand Rapids lines was begun in 1898 and 1900.

One of the problems hindering the electric railroad companies were their difficulties with the railroads. At least once the trolley wire crossing the Lake Shore Railroad track was cut, causing the death of a young man who had been ordered to do the cutting. A few years later the crossing fork of the interurban was torn up by a crew of the G. R. and I on Washington Avenue. The electric railroads were occasionally able to secure injunctions restraining the railroad companies, but these do not seem to have been effective.

Still the work on the interurbans continued and in early August 1900, service on the Kalamazoo-Battle Creek line was opened. During the first few days the cars were crowded as a thousand passengers were taken from Battle Creek to Kalamazoo. A spur line from the track ran to Gull Lake.⁹

The street cars and interurbans were extremely popular, even though they did frighten the horses and caused occasional accidents. The first serious accident occurred in the summer of 1895 when a sixteen-year-old boy leaned out of the car window and struck his head on one of the iron poles and was killed. The city was then blamed for permitting the street car company to place its trolley poles so near the tracks.

A few weeks later a young woman was killed when the carriage in which she was riding struck the wheel of a street car. This accident, however, did not seem to be the fault of the company; for it was learned that the driver of the carriage in which the young woman was riding was racing another vehicle. The driver of the fatal vehicle was also accused of drinking and admitted that he had drunk two beers, but insisted that he was sober.¹⁰

The headquarters of the Michigan Traction Company were first located on the west side of the Kalamazoo House. Later the company's offices and car barns were moved to the Lawrence Chapin

building on North Rose, now the Vermeulen Furniture Store.

The electric light companies were also having their problems. In the summer of 1894, the city council voted to contract for a municipal plant, but six weeks later the mayor and council were served with an injunction restraining them from proceeding with the contract. Whereupon the council ordered a special election, which was held on November 6 and which authorized the construction of a municipal light plant. This facility evidently did not prosper, for the following summer the city light plant, which was probably worth \$70,000, was sold for \$20,000 to satisfy the mortgages against it. Yet, in spite of setbacks, the electric lighting business grew and expanded; in 1899 the Kalamazoo Valley Electric Company erected a large power plant on the Kalamazoo River near Allegan and the electricity generated there was brought to Kalamazoo.¹¹

As living conditions in the city were being improved, life was also becoming more pleasant and attractive for the farmer. On October 15, 1900, two Rural Free Delivery routes were begun from the Kalamazoo post office. Although a mail route had been carried from Climax for some time, these were the first to be carried from Kalamazoo, and by 1901 there were four mail routes, totaling over a hundred miles and serving more than 1,700 people. With few exceptions, so it was reported, every farmer now took a daily paper. And the young people on the farms seemed to be more contented.¹²

III

Although prosperity seemed to be quite general in Kalamazoo, there was still much want and need. Some families were forced to live for months on cabbage, and housing for the poor was often inadequate: in one instance a family of twelve lived in two rooms.

A member of the Telegraph staff made a tour of the poorest places and reported that poverty and squalor were to be found in many houses; lack of work and illness were cited as the chief causes of poverty.

One of the more pathetic examples of the desperate condition of the poor was that of a colored family with seven children. The family was unable to pay their rent of \$1.45 a week, and two constables were sent to evict them, putting the children and household goods out in the snow. The father, who had been absent, returned about this time and a brawl ensued. The parents were then arrested and taken to jail and the children, with the exception of the baby, were taken to the county home.

But it must be said that there was considerable regard for the needs and problems of the poor. In December 1896 the Associated Charities of Kalamazoo was organized, the object of the organization being to prevent vagrancy and pauperism, guard against impostors, and improve the condition of the poor by social and sanitary reforms. Its work was to be completely divorced from all questions of religious belief, politics and nationality. Caring for the indigent cost Kalamazoo County \$17,163.82 in 1898 and 1,814 persons received some kind of aid.¹³

The large number of suicides indicates that, even though life was not as complex as it is today, there were many in "the good old days" who found the stresses of life too much for them. Some of them used violent means, such as hanging and poison, to put an end to their existence, but morphine was the most favored route. In those days it apparently was possible to procure morphine and laudanum without a prescription.

Toward the end of the century definite progress was being

made in the treatment of diseases that had long proved fatal. Appendicitis, which had taken so many lives and whose true nature had not been diagnosed, was now successfully treated by surgery; and diphtheria, which had been fatal to countless scores of children, was being controlled by the use of antitoxin. By the summer of 1897, Kalamazoo physicians were using x-ray in the diagnosis of illness and its use increased rapidly.¹⁴

Kalamazoo, however, was having difficulty with its hospital. In the spring of 1896, the Sisters of Borgess Hospital took exception to some allusions made by the retiring president of the medical staff to the alleged miraculous cures performed at the shrine of St. Anne de Beaupre, and the medical staff of the hospital, a total of nine physicians, was dismissed. The doctors then expressed a wish for "a hospital where they would be kicked out only for some fault of the members."

A week later the Academy of Medicine, which had been founded in 1883, met informally to promote the project of an independent, unsectarian hospital. In another week the plans to build a second medical facility were well under way--the site had been selected and part of the money for building it ~~had been~~ subscribed. Although Dr. Van Deusen was chairman of the first meeting, Dr. Rush McNair led out in finding a solution to the problem. He was joined by four other physicians, one of whom was Van Deusen, and these men organized the Kalamazoo Hospital Association, Van Deusen being the organization's first president. Dr. W. E. Upjohn became president in 1903.¹⁵

Henry Brees had a house and lot on John and Cedar Streets, which he gave for the new institution, Herbert Everard gave another lot, and the doctors bought a third one, so that the property consisted of 193 feet frontage on John Street, with a depth of a

hundred feet. The building on the Brees lot was the first hospital and was opened in 1900 with a capacity of seven patients. The new institution was known as the Kalamazoo Hospital. Raising money for a new and adequate building was the Kalamazoo Hospital Association's greatest problem. Benefits were held, but the money raised did not amount to much; a benefit held in May 1901 brought in only three hundred dollars. A few days later someone offered the Women's Auxiliary of the Association \$12,000 if it could raise \$18,000.

Finally, on December 3, 1903, ground for the new building was broken, Mrs. E. H. Van Deusen turning the first shovel. It was opened for patients in September 1905 and was dedicated on December 4. The new hospital now began to forge ahead. Very soon it began the training of nurses, the first class being graduated in 1907. During that same year the name of the institution was changed to Bronson Hospital, and on May 1, 1920, the Michigan Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church took over its administration. 16

Meanwhile, in spite of the unfortunate misunderstanding of 1896, Borgess Hospital continued to grow and ~~expands~~. During 1899 it had a total patient count of 233, seventy-five of whom were surgical patients. In early June 1901, Bishop J. S. Foley laid the cornerstone for an addition to the hospital and gave the address. Afterwards the Sisters of St. Joseph solicited those present and collected \$2,353.78. 17

In 1917 a new Borgess Hospital was built on Gull Road and for ten years there were two Borgess Hospitals, the New and the Old. Then the two facilities were combined and the doors of the Portage Street hospital were closed. Four years later the property was bought by the Upjohn Company and the building razed. 17

Kalamazoo's third medical institution was the Hygeia

Sanitarium, but it, as the name would indicate, was more of a sanitarium than a hospital. The institution survived for a number of years, but in late 1898 it was to be sold for \$43,000 to satisfy the claims against it.¹⁸

The Young Men's Christian Association was another Kalamazoo institution that was having its difficulties. Sometime in the mid 1890's, the heirs of Johnson Patrick brought suit in the courts against the association for the property on which its building was standing. Many years earlier this land had been dedicated by Bronson and Richardson for church purposes. The plaintiffs claimed that when the land was sold by St. Luke's to the YMCA, the original grant was voided. In August 1899 the Michigan Supreme Court ruled that the heirs had an interest in the land; then these parties and the heirs of Dan Arnold indicated that they would also lay claim to Bronson Park and that part of church square occupied by the First Reformed and First Congregational churches. The lawyer for the contestants then offered to make a cash settlement with the Association for \$6,000, but its attorneys preferred to try the case a second time, and it was continued in the courts for years. But not everything was dark for the Y: in the spring of 1900 the people of Kalamazoo, after months of hard and persistent work, succeeded in raising \$25,000 to wipe out its indebtedness.¹⁹

IV

Fires were still frequent and destructive occurrences. Many homes were destroyed by fires caused by oil stoves and exploding gas cans. A number of small towns in the area were badly damaged by fires; in Augusta only four stores were left standing, twenty-three stores and three dwellings having burned to the ground.²⁰

Kalamazoo's most destructive fire in property damage started

on a Sunday afternoon in early June 1895 in the lumber yard of Dewing and Sons, at the corner of Edwards Street and Kalamazoo Avenue. By the time the fire department arrived, the fire was already out of control. In just a short time the lumber yard was one great blaze and the whole block, bounded by Edwards, Kalamazoo, North Burdick and the Michigan Central tracks was in flames. Assistance was asked from the fire departments of Battle Creek and Grand Rapids, but these requests were later canceled. The chief of the Kalamazoo Fire Department said that the city should have steam fire engines, but in this fire, he admitted, they would not have done much good. The loss to Dewing from this fire was around \$126,000 and nearly two hundred men were put out of work.²¹

The city's most disastrous fire, at least in the loss of human lives, was the one caused by an explosion in the factories of Hall Brothers and the Kalamazoo Paper Box Company, located on North Church and Williard Streets. In this fire ten men, four of them firemen, were killed and sixteen injured, some of them seriously. The cause of the explosion was never definitely determined, but it was suspected that the chemicals stored in the Hall factory, especially the two thousand gallons of alcohol, ~~could have~~ caused the explosion. The coroner's inquest was a prolonged one; the only verdict it could arrive at, however, was that the fire was caused by spontaneous combustion from an unknown cause.

On March 2, 1898, public memorial services were held for the men killed in the fire. The mayor requested that all places of business be closed from four till six. The funeral services, including the color of the caskets and flowers, were reported in minute detail, and Father O'Brien paid a "glowing tribute to the martyred dead."²²

The Chamber of Commerce set up a relief fund committee and

within two weeks over \$5,000 had been contributed for the relief of those who had suffered from the fire.²²

The third serious fire of the period was the one that destroyed the high school on February 1, 1897; this will be described in more detail in the section on schools.

V

In the fall of 1897, Kalamazoo tried something new--a great and free street fair. The fair featured concerts, "georgeous" booths everywhere, a magnificent floral parade, which exceeded the hopes of even the most sanguine. In the parade were floats decorated with roses, poppies and other flowers. Dr. Van Deusen's carriage was voted the most original; it featured three men and a coachman in costume, representing the King of France and the Sultan of Turkey in attendance upon Uncle Sam. Other events of the occasion were aerial and acrobatic performances, tight rope and trapeze acts, races, fireworks, baby shows, electrical displays, fruit exhibits, dances and horse and livestock shows.

The street fair was accepted with great enthusiasm by the crowds, and it was estimated that there were 75,000 strangers present in the city, including farmers and their families in great numbers.²³

The first fair was such a success that another one was held the following year. This one too drew great crowds and farmers had difficulty finding parking for their horses. Three hundred people were left in Three Rivers because there was no room for them on the train. The outstanding event of this second festival was the arrival of Gen. William R. Shafter, Kalamazoo's hero of the Spanish-American War, at noon on Thursday, October 6. Shafter made a very good impression, especially as he took time to

visit his old and ill friends who couldn't come to see him. The following day was Peace Jubilee Day and a great peace arch, illuminated with hundreds of electric lights, was erected on Main Street to commemorate the day.

This fair marked the first appearance of the horseless carriage in Kalamazoo; it appeared in the floral parade and was decorated with yellow sunflowers. Afterwards it was stationed at Court House square and its owners did a brisk business moving people at ten cents a ride. 24

The momentous event of the third street festival was the hour that President William McKinley spent in Kalamazoo on October 17. The parade was held in the evening, and the streets through which it passed were described as a fairyland of Japanese lanterns, colored fire, arc lamps and locomotive headlights. The President, Senator Burrows and Mayor Howard were in the carriage that led the parade. Miss Alma Ihling was queen of the occasion. Every civic organization of the city was represented, and the business blocks on Main Street were packed solid with yelling people. Reporters said that this was the most enthusiastic reception given the President that they had ever seen. Also featured in the parade was the Telegraph's electric automobile, loaned to it by Montgomery Ward. 25

VI

The automobile had now made its appearance and was destined to play an ever increasing role in the life of Kalamazoo and the nation as a whole. At first it was just a rich man's toy, but in another decade its significance for all was becoming evident.

Whatever the automobile did was news. In late June, 1900, the Upjohn vehicle made its longest trip, driving all the way from Kalamazoo to Ann Arbor, a distance of 125 miles. The men driving

the car reported that the only piece of good road was between Chelsea and Dexter. The trip was accomplished between six in the morning and sunset and was made without mishap or breakdown, truly a feat for an early auto. The following month G. W. Taylor's "very handsome tourist automobile" arrived; it had one seat and a baggage compartment in the rear.²⁶

From its earliest days the automobile was the object of jokes and feeble attempts at versification. One of these attempts, labeled the "Song of the Automobile" appeared in the Telegraph:

I rumble over asphalt ways
And rattle over cobble,
I dash into the cable's maze
And round the corner wobble;
I roll and tilt and turn about,
A record fast pursuing,
Until my battery gives out,
And then there's nothing doing.²⁷

But for the ordinary person, bicycle racing was the craze and sport of the day, and a race was sometimes the cause of more excitement than a hotly contested ball game. The fad alarmed the ministers, because Sunday was often chosen as the best day for a spin. The cyclists were soon creating hazards for pedestrians, and the police began arresting those who were riding on the streets. One of the first to be arrested was Capt. J. B. Westledge, who paid a fine of two dollars.

The new plank track at Recreation Park was opened to the public on May 20, 1896. The track was unique in that 2,000 candle-power electric lights were installed, permitting night racing. Its opening was celebrated by a parade of nearly five hundred cyclists and all kinds of racing.

Perhaps it should be noted that bicycles were not cheap; in 1893 their prices ranged from \$100 to \$125.²⁸

VII

Nationally and locally, Cuba and the Spanish-American War were the most exciting news events of the decade of the 1890's. For several years before the war, the papers carried numerous accounts of the atrocities allegedly perpetrated by the Spanish military on the defenseless population of Cuba. In April 1896 it was reported that the horrible butchery of Cubans by Spanish officers was continuing, four hundred laborers having been killed in cold blood. A year later the Cuban Insurrection was receiving still more attention in the press and lurid coverage was given to the brutalities reportedly committed by the Spanish forces. A United States senator, returning from a visit to Cuba in the spring of 1898, declared the ^{situation there} ^ to be hell. In late November 1897, Spain had granted autonomy to Cuba and Puerto Rico, but the sensational reports of Spanish atrocities did not stop.

Then in February 1898, the Spanish minister to the United States wrote an offensive letter and resigned, because he was no longer acceptable to Washington. By mid February the emotions and suspicions of the nation were no longer under much restraint, and all that was needed to bring things to a head was the explosion on the U.S.S. Maine, anchored in Havana Harbor, on February 15. The explosion resulted in the death of 260 men. Although the captain of the Maine urged that public opinion be suspended until further reports were in, people were greatly agitated by this development. In Kalamazoo the editor of the Telegraph also asked its readers to wait for the truth, but these appeals to moderation went unheeded for the most part, and no extra editions of the papers were ever sold quicker, and men declared themselves ready to enlist and fight.²⁹

In his report of the developments subsequent to the explosion on the battleship, the captain of the Maine stated that the utmost

sympathy and respect had been shown by the Spaniards, and that Spanish officials had participated in the impressive funeral services held for nineteen of the Maine dead; his report, however, did little or nothing to calm the inflamed passions of countless Americans. Leading men in Kalamazoo agreed that war with Spain should be avoided, except at the expense of the nation's honor, but this was the voice of only a minority.

By early April the news from Cuba had become even more alarming, and Governor Pingree's request for \$500,000 to put Michigan on a war footing was passed by both houses of the Legislature without a dissenting vote. On April 16 both houses of Congress asked for immediate intervention in Cuba, and four days later the independence of the island was recognized by the United States. When Woodford, the United States minister to Spain was refused an opportunity to present his government's ultimatum to the Spanish officials and, instead, was given his passport, the United States decided that Spain had declared war on her.

The excitement in Kalamazoo was intense: whistles blew continuously, the streets were crowded with people moving restlessly back and forth, and bands played the Star Spangled Banner and were loudly applauded. But one Civil War veteran, in comparing the agitation of 1861 with that of 1898, exclaimed, "Why the excitement today is the froth of a glass of soda water against the seething and boiling kettle of the excitement of 1861."³⁰

One hundred fifteen Kalamazoo men volunteered and enlisted; the largest muster, so the Telegraph boasted, of any city its size in Michigan; there was also a corporal's guard of volunteer nurses. By late April, Company C, Second Regiment of the Michigan National Guard was ready to leave for camp at Island Lake. When the company

left Kalamazoo, flags flew from every building ; public schools were dismissed for half a day; and Gen. William Shakespeare presented Company C with a flag from the G. A. R.³¹

Kalamazoo was inordinately proud that a Galesburg boy, Gen. W. R. Shafter, the son of a Kalamazoo County pioneer, had been commissioned a full major general and assigned to important work in the war with Spain. The military invasion of Cuba had been scheduled to begin in early June, but it was not until the 11th of the month that the U.S. Army with 15,000 men sailed for the island. The troops under Shafter landed without loss of life and two weeks later he began the attack on the Spanish positions. By early July, Admiral Cervera's fleet had been destroyed, and Shafter was demanding the surrender of Santiago.

General Shafter was the hero of the hour, and the Telegraph celebrated his exploits in verse:

Billy Shafter went to town
The Spaniards fer to coral;
He made 'em take the pennant down;
But that was tough on Toral.
Shafter said to him 'give in,'
He said, 'Don't think I have ter';
But soon he found he couldn't win
'Gainst Bully Billy Shafter.³²

Although the Spanish Army had offered no serious opposition to the American forces, the latter soon faced a much more formidable foe--yellow fever. On July 16 it was reported that there were nearly a hundred cases of yellow fever in the army at Santiago; two weeks later, three thousand cases. Fortunately for the Americans, a protocol was signed by Spain and the United States on August 12, which arranged a cessation of hostilities, and the troops began returning home.³³

On September 23 Company C of the 32d Michigan Regiment debarked at the C. K. & S. station at Kalamazoo. The men were greeted by a

crowd of over 10,000 and their welcome was climaxed by a dinner at the Burdick.³⁴

VIII

Politics during this period was both lively and complex. Free silver and Populism were the issues of the day. The former was the issue that received much publicity and divided both parties. In the Republican Convention of June 1896, in which William McKinley was nominated for President on the first ballot, free silver was overwhelmingly defeated. Although decisively rejected by the Republicans, the question of free silver loomed large in the campaign of 1896. A large audience greeted Senator H. M. Teller at the Academy of Music, where he spoke for three hours in favor of the free coinage of silver. Judge Albert Williams of Ionia, one of the sixteen men who had helped to organize the Republican Party at Jackson in 1854, also spoke and likened the Party to the prodigal son.

The free silverites had a parade on the evening of October 13 and the Bryan men turned out in large numbers. By actual count, according to the Telegraph, there were 325 people in the parade, including the two undertakers who headed it.

William Jennings Bryan, the Democratic Presidential candidate, received a tumultuous welcome in Kalamazoo. The people who waited for him at the Michigan Central depot were packed in so tightly that those who raised their arms to wave and throw their hats couldn't get them down again. For over two hours people fought for a chance to get somewhere within seeing distance of the speaker's stand in Bronson Park. Bryan was introduced by A. M. Todd, candidate for Congress. After his address, Bryan, carrying a gigantic bunch of Kalamazoo's finest celery, had to fight his way back to his carriage, assisted by two policemen.³⁵

The Republicans were worried. To heighten the enthusiasm of the local faithful, the "Big Four Generals"--Alger, Howard, Sickles and Stewart--were brought to Kalamazoo. The train which brought them and their delegation from White Pigeon to the city had a cannon mounted on a flat car. The cannon was fired frequently and farmers poured into Kalamazoo from all directions. The generals spoke in Bronson Park to around seven thousand people; in the evening Gen. Lew Wallace, author of Ben Hur and The Prince of India, spoke at the Academy of Music. Another feature of the day was a "monster" parade.³⁶

These efforts paid off, for the election on November 5 was another Republican victory. The Telegraph printed 13,237 papers in four editions on Wednesday morning and these were bought up as fast as they were printed. Although McKinley carried Kalamazoo by 866 votes, the townships of the county favored the Fusion Ticket, a union of the Free Silver and Peoples' Parties.³⁷

A. M. Todd, who in July had refused to say whether he was a Populist, even though he believed in its principles, and who also was the treasurer of the National Committee of the new Prohibition Party, was elected representative of the Third Congressional District by a vote of 24,466 to 24,041, to the great surprise of the Republicans, some of whom described his election as an accident or an amusing surprise. Todd was unable to win reelection two years later; there were simply too many Republicans in Kalamazoo County.³⁸

After the election the Hon. Charles S. May predicted:

We shall never know the old Democratic party anymore. It will be in vain for the gold Democrats to try to resuscitate it. It is one of the best features of the campaign that it has broken party lines. Henceforth, for many years at least, there will be in this country two new and great parties, organized or rather reorganized to meet new and great issues. Only the old names remain...³⁹

A prediction that has been apropos at times for both major

parties during the last seventy-five years.

The Boer War, which was engrossing the interest of many in 1900, had political overtones in Kalamazoo. The Gazette accused both the Telegraph and the Republicans of being against the Boers. Whereupon the Telegraph retorted, "Hollanders of Kalamazoo can place no dependence on the statements of the local democratic paper or its local agents."

Theodore Roosevelt's visit on September 8, 1900, took care of both the Republicans and the Hollanders. The Vice-President received a wildly enthusiastic greeting: flags and streamers flew from nearly every building from the Union depot to Bronson Park. Roosevelt, wearing his Rough Rider's hat, dusty shoes, trousers with no crease whatever, and painfully wrinkled coat tails, was joyously welcomed. The Telegraph concluded its report of the events of the day with the observation that this was a great day for the Hollanders.⁴⁰

The shooting of President McKinley on September 6, 1901, by Czollogesc and his death eight days later deeply moved the people of Kalamazoo. Three memorial services were held for the assassinated President: a union service at the Congregational Church, a public memorial at the Academy of Music, and one at the high school.⁴¹

For nearly eighty years the municipal government of Kalamazoo was a political football. Aldermen and mayors were voted into office for their political affiliations and usually not for their abilities. Democrats were jubilant on those rare occasions when their party swept the village or city offices, and so were the Republicans when they were victorious.

This is not to say that these political administrations were devoid of accomplishments; much progress was made, but there were many in the city who felt that its government should be above

national and state politics. By 1915, those who believed that Kalamazoo should have a more efficient and responsible municipal government were numerous enough to secure the adoption two years later of a city-manager form of government. Although this development has not achieved all that its advocates had hoped for, it has given the city a relatively accountable and effective government.

By the end of the nineteenth century, it had already become evident to many observers that the United States of the future would be an urban rather than a rural society, and that it would be impossible to check the movement of the population from the farm and rural communities to the large cities. Therefore it was imperative that these cities develop efficiency and responsibility in their governments, but, the editor of the Telegraph asked, "Admitting that our already great cities will grow greater, what if they are incapable of proper self-government?" A question that still remains unanswered, though many are convinced that the answer is in the negative.⁴²

IX

Before the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, all of Kalamazoo's pioneers were gone. Jess W. Turner, one of the township's first settlers, died on July 10, 1896, at the age of ninety-six. Mrs. Lucinda Hinsdale Stone, PhD., wife of Dr. James A. B. Stone, who had died in 1888, Mrs. H. G. Wells, Samuel T. Brown, he had driven the first stage into Bronson in 1833, and Henry E. Hoyt, a member of the Board of Education for thirty years and its secretary for eighteen, died in 1900. During the year ending August 30, 1901, eighty pioneers died.⁴³

Dr. E. H. Van Deusen, Kalamazoo's most highly respected philanthropist, died on July 6, 1909, at Interpines, a private

sanitarium at Goshen, New York. He was nearly eighty years old when he died. Not only was Dr. Van Deusen the first superintendent of the Michigan Asylum for the Insane, now the Kalamazoo State Hospital, but he also served on the commissions that selected the locations of the Northern Michigan Asylum for the Insane at Traverse City and the Eastern Michigan Asylum at Pontiac, and he superintended their construction. From 1881 until 1885 he was a member of the Michigan State Board of Corrections and Charities. He had resigned his position as medical director of the Kalamazoo Hospital in 1878.

The foremost benefactions of the Van Deusens to Kalamazoo were the Public Library and the parish house of St. Luke's Church; their donation to Bronson Hospital brought that institution to realization and their gifts to the Children's Home were also generous. Their private charities were numerous, but largely unknown, for they "never did an act of philanthropy without shunning publicity or attaching their name to any kindness if they could possibly avoid it."

The Gazette concluded its obituary of Dr. Van Deusen with the following summation of his life and character:

To enumerate the different acts of benevolence of Dr. Van Deusen during his long life in this city would be impossible, but it is enough to say that as a benefactor, in religious and charitable ways, who gave for the love of giving alone, Dr. Van Deusen will always be regarded as the greatest philanthropist of Kalamazoo county.⁴⁴

Even though the pioneers were gone and pioneer days well in the past, there were occasional incidents that reminded old timers of bygone days.

One such incident was the queer procession that amused the people of South Burdick on the morning of January 7, 1901. First in the procession was a small dog, then a farmer's team drawing a

load of hay, next Henry Schaberg's horse, and finally Mr. Schaberg himself. What had happened was that the load of hay had passed his grocery where his horse was standing unhitched. The horse had taken a nab at the passing hay, had followed it with another, and then had kept on going. Schaberg's chase after his horse provided much amusement to his neighbors.⁴⁵

X

In the field of higher education gratifying advances were made, but elementary and secondary education seemed to be marking time.

Kalamazoo College, whose existence had been repeatedly threatened during its history of more than sixty years, seemed finally to be facing a more certain and hopeful future. In June 1896, the college was reported out of debt, a man from Detroit having given it \$5,000; four years later the institution received a bequest of \$50,000 from the Charles C. Bowen estate, the money to be used for the endowment of a Greek professorship. In late December 1897, the Baptist Young Peoples' unions of the State began to plan the raising of \$20,000 for a library for the college, this to be a gift from the young people of the nineteenth century to the young people of the twentieth century. The college now had nearly 150 students enrolled.⁴⁶

Nazareth College, which today is an important educational institution of higher learning for young women, had its beginnings as an academy in the last years of the century. The cornerstone for the academy was laid on April 8, 1897. It was also designated to be a home for the Sisters of St. Joseph and a retreat for the sisters who had grown old in service.

The original buildings consisted of two structures: the main building was 154 x 48 feet in its dimensions and three stories high and the second one was 97 x 38 feet and two stories high, and

it also housed the chapel. The total cost was around \$30,000.

Nazareth Academy was dedicated September 22, 1898, by the Most Reverend Apostolic Delegate Archbishop Martenelli, but it had been opened to students two weeks earlier. On September 21 a reception, sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce, the Michigan Federation of Labor and the mayor of Kalamazoo, was held for Martenelli at the Academy of Music. It was reported that nearly two thousand persons shook hands with the guest of honor.⁴⁷

In the spring of 1901, the Michigan Legislature was seriously considering the establishment of another normal school, and Kalamazoo felt that it had a good chance of securing the new school. Delegations from Allegan, Decatur, Grand Rapids, Holland, Kalamazoo, Muskegon and Zeeland were in Lansing lobbying for the school. The Kalamazoo delegation, however, spent most of its time advocating the passage of the measure, irrespective of the site. The bill for the new normal college was passed by the legislature and signed by the governor in May 1903. The law provided \$25,000 for a suitable building, \$5,000 for equipment and \$7,000 for salaries; the law also specified that the school was to be ready for students by September 1, 1904.⁴⁸

At least thirty cities wanted the college, but Kalamazoo was chosen as the site on August 28, 1903. This choice was the result of a spirited campaign by Kalamazoo citizens. The city itself promised to give twenty acres of land, provide the facilities for gas and electricity, grade streets adjacent to the site and lay concrete walks on these streets, permit the use of public school facilities until the State could provide the buildings, pay one half of the salaries of the teachers employed in the training school

as long as the public schools were used, and finally to appropriate \$40,000 for building purposes.

On October 19 a special election was held to see whether the voters of Kalamazoo were in favor of borrowing \$70,000 and issuing bonds for that purpose. A large number turned out and the proposal carried by a vote of almost eight to one.

Prospect Hill, today the east campus of Western Michigan University, was chosen as the site for the new school, which was to be known as Western Normal School, although it was often called the Western State Teachers College. Dwight Bryant Waldo, whose parents had come to Plainwell when he was nine years old and who had been appointed superintendent of the new normal school in Marquette in 1899, was chosen director of the institution. Waldo served as director or president of the school for over thirty years, retiring in 1936.

Classes began at Central High School on June 27, 1904, and the initial enrollment was considerably over one hundred, with prospects for nearly twice that number. The-morning Classes began at 7:00 and continued until 3:00 in the afternoon. Some of the courses offered were psychology, general history, general methods, rural school management and rural school law,--for many of the school's graduates would be teaching in rural schools--cooking, domestic arts and primary methods.

Professor Waldo also fostered the social side of the school. For the Wednesday evening following the beginning of classes, he planned a reception for faculty and students. The program consisted of remarks by a number of people, a musical presentation by local talent and a barrel of lemonade. He also invited several prominent persons to give lectures during the school term.⁴⁹

The event that caused the greatest excitement and concern in the public school system was the burning of the high school on the morning of February 1, 1897. Three firemen were seriously injured in the fire, one of them, it was feared, fatally. The complete destruction of the school library, including three hundred volumes of "valuable reference works," was considered one of the greatest losses. After the fire the president of Kalamazoo College offered the use of the college chapel for the high school classes, George Hall tendered his new block on East Main, and the Young Men's Christian Association, its facilities. The latter offer was the one accepted.

Steps were taken immediately for the construction of a new high school, which was completed in February 1898. This building served as Kalamazoo's high school for nearly thirty years.⁵⁰

Interest in the ~~annual~~ school elections seems to have been less than lukewarm. The big issue of the October 24, 1898 special school election was whether Kalamazoo should come under the Michigan uniform text book law. By 3:00 in the afternoon only 136 votes had been cast, most of them against the proposal. In the annual election of the following year only 325 votes had been recorded by 2:30 and very few of them by women. The two issues in this election were the appropriation of \$4,000 for the introduction of manual training into the schools, the training to be for grades five to ten inclusive, and the same amount for the maintenance of the kindergarten departments. Both propositions passed.⁵¹

Chapter 10

THE VAN DEUSEN LIBRARY: 1894-1918

As this period began, the prospects for the further growth and development of the Kalamazoo Library were indeed auspicious: it now had a beautiful new building, of which the community was extremely proud, and the Board of Education seemed ready to foster its continued expansion. Before the end of the period, however, it became evident that new leadership and new procedures would be required if the Library was to be capable of meeting the demands and challenges of the twentieth century.

I

Shortly before the Library was moved into the new building, on April 11, 1893, the Board of Education authorized the appointment of a special committee of citizens to aid in the selection of books for the Public Library. This committee, which comprised six members, three men and three women, was known as the Library Committee. The members of the original committee were Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Van Deusen, chosen for three-year terms, D. J. Davidson Burns and Mrs. H. O. Hitchcock, for two-year terms, and Henry N. French and Mrs. J. K. Wagner, for one-year terms. Although it was still in existence nearly thirty years later, we have no record either of its functions or effectiveness.¹

That the new building would require expanded service soon became obvious, and so, on May 30, 1893, Miss Anna Jeffers was

appointed assistant librarian at a salary of \$25 a month. The Board approved her appointment on the condition that the Library be kept open two evenings a week for the delivery of books, and that it remain open during vacations, the librarians being expected to take their vacations at different times.²

The first year in the new building saw a fifty percent increase in the Library's circulation. The circulation for the year 1893/94 totaled 54,365, a gain of nearly 16,000 over the previous year. At this time ~~its~~ holdings ~~of the Library~~ consisted of 19,929 reference and circulating books, 1,404 general periodicals, 103 general cyclopedias and 3,588 public documents. During the year \$1,658.08 was spent for books and the records indicate that 1,532 books were purchased and that the total accessions numbered 1,841.³

The opening of a children's reading room in the basement was ~~one of~~ the most significant innovations of the period. Two hundred books were placed in a case easily accessible to the children and Miss Roberts noted that this room was greatly appreciated by the children, especially in stormy weather. On December 30, 1896, a full-fledged children's department was established in the basement of the Library. The Kalamazoo Public Library thus became one of the first ten public libraries in the nation to recognize the need for a children's department. It was the second in the state of Michigan, Detroit having opened its children's room a few months earlier.⁴ ~~In 1921 the Children's Room of the Kalamazoo Public Library was named the Van Deusen Room.~~

Anna Jeffers, the assistant librarian, apparently lead out in the establishment of this work for children. She was greatly interested in getting the children to read and for a year she canvassed the community, talking to mothers of children and asking

them to send their children to the children's room. She also brought books to the homes and urged mothers to read to their children. The books that she promoted--the Dolly Dimple series, Prudy Parlon and the Elsie Dinsmore books--would get scant or no consideration from the modern children's librarian, but these titles introduced many a child to the world of books.

Those who frequented the children's room were quickly impressed with the necessity of being quiet, and they stopped talking in the moment they entered the Library.⁵

Anna Jeffers was one of the stalwarts of the early years of the Library; she came to the Library in 1889, serving first as a desk assistant, then assistant librarian and later head of the reference department. She retired in 1919, having given thirty years of service.

During the following fifteen years but little progress was made in developing the work of the children's department. A Miss Gould had supervised it, but Miss Roberts wanted the work professionally organized and asked the Training School for Children's Librarians (later the Carnegie Library School) in Pittsburg to recommend someone to head up the department. The opening was mentioned to Fannie Kerr, who was graduating in the summer of 1910. Miss Kerr came to Kalamazoo for an interview with the Library Committee of the Board of Education and being hired, began her work in September, the first trained librarian in the Public Library.

When the new children's librarian arrived in Kalamazoo, Miss Zoe Shaw, the supervisor of the grades in the city schools, took her to all the schools to meet the teachers and to invite the children to the story hour that was being started. This story hour was held every Saturday in the museum room adjoining the children's department in the basement of the Library. The average attendance

at these story hours was between fifty and seventy-five.

About twice a year Miss Kerr visited every school room through the eighth grade in the ~~school~~ district, told a story in each room, invited the children to the story hour and gave out library applications cards. Library work for children was conducted particularly at the East Avenue and Washington schools. Fannie Kerr was in charge of the Library's children's department for five years, being assisted by Miss Della Stimpson.⁶

The total circulation for the children's room during its first six months was over 10,000 volumes. On Saturday, March 6, 1897, 240 books were loaned and the largest circulation for one week was 580.⁷

II

In February 1895 the reading room of the Library was opened on Sundays from 1:30 to 5:30 in the afternoon. For many years the only service provided on Sundays was accessibility to the reading room. Then it was decided that books could be checked out to patrons and a limited amount of reference work was also provided. In 1948 the Library was closed on Sundays during July and August.⁸

The Library now began to receive valuable gifts. A. J. Shakespeare, for many years publisher of the Kalamazoo Gazette, presented it with fifty-four bound volumes of the daily and weekly Gazette, a gift that is still appreciated by researchers. A large number of mounted pictures ~~was~~ also given and these were placed in the children's room. Many of these pictures were loaned to art students and teachers for use in the school rooms, and this service proved to be very popular. Today the Library has thousands of pictures and their loaning continues to be a popular and useful service.⁹

The circulation of books totaled 60,773 during the fiscal year 1896/97, a gain of over 10,000 over the previous year, but most of this increase was due to the opening of the children's room. Eleven years later the book circulation had increased to 81,941; it would have been greater by at least 4,000 volumes, if it had not been necessary to close the Library in March because of a fire. There had been a fire on November 20, 1907, and it seems likely that the building was closed the following March to permit the completion of the work of redecorating. The annual report of 1910/11 noted a decrease in the number of book loans. This was attributed to the greater prosperity of the people and the effect the theater was having on their reading habits. Fifty years later a similar effect would be attributed to television.¹⁰

The Kalamazoo Public Library was designated a depository of United States Government documents in December 1907. For many years it was the only depository in the area; it is still a depository, but only a partial one. ¹¹

As the Library grew in its holdings and as the circulation of its books increased, a new catalogue and a new system of charging books became necessary. In her annual report of 1894/95, Miss Roberts stated that a printed supplement to the catalogue was urgently needed. Then she continued:

If we are to keep pace with the other libraries of the state a card catalogue, or something that will take its place seems almost a necessity.

In no other way can the full resources of the Library in any and all topics become known to the public, as new acquisitions continually render a printed catalogue incomplete.¹²

Thirteen years later she reported that the card catalogue now contained cards for all the books acquired before 1898 that were listed in the American Library Association catalogue. This, she said was a good beginning on the work of cataloging, but most

of the work was still to come. More will be said concerning the Library's catalogue problems later on.¹³

III

The branches of the Kalamazoo Public Library are an integral part of the library system. These branches had their beginnings over sixty years ago. In 1910 the Washington Square Branch, then called the Portage Branch, and the East Branch were opened. The former one was located in the basement of the Portage School and was largely used by children. Nine years later the branch was moved to a store building at 1348 Portage; in its new quarters the circulation grew from 16,236 to 45,000

The East Branch was located in the East Avenue School, corner of East Main and Charlotte Avenues, where the Roosevelt School now stands. Its collection was smaller than that of the branch on Portage, but its quarters were more pleasant; at this time its books were not accessible to adults. In 1921 it was moved to the East Annex building, where it was able to give better service to the children of the Roosevelt School and to the adults of the East side. Here its circulation grew from 15,000 to 25,000.¹⁴

About 1914 Miss Annie D. Clark began to organize a collection of books and other library materials, known as the Alumni Branch Libraries, because she persuaded the Alumni Association to assist her in securing sufficient books to begin the work. These materials were placed in six of the Kalamazoo schools; namely, Lake Street, McKinley, North Westnedge, Parkwood, West Main and Woodward. In the spring of 1916, Miss Clark urged the Board of Education to accept these school library stations, and on June 5 they were incorporated into the public library system and became part of its branch system. Miss Bessie S. Newell was placed in charge of these branches and worked for two years without a salary.

In making the resolution that these ~~school~~ library stations be turned over entirely to the jurisdiction of the school board for it to handle and enlarge as it seemed wisest and best in the judgment of its members, J. B. Balch stated:

I think we all realize that there is nothing at present that will be so beneficial to our young men and women and possibly to some of the older, as to have a library accessible to the pupils and older people in the different (sic) schools...

The voters of the district at the annual school meeting on June 6 also expressed their appreciation to Miss Clark.¹⁵

Probably in the fall of 1922, although the records are not clear about this, the North West~~ledge~~ Branch was transferred to the fine new quarters that had been especially planned for it on the first floor of the new Lincoln Junior High School. It soon became known as the Lincoln Branch, and from the very beginning the people of the community felt that it was their library. The book circulation during the first year at Lincoln rose from 17,000 to 30,000.¹⁶

Although this was a period of growth and development for the Public Library, its book budget and salaries remained low. In 1886 the book budget had been \$1,291.86 and the librarian's salary, \$360 a year. According to the minutes of the Board for August 7, 1907, Miss Roberts' salary was increased to \$1,000, but her report for 1916 gives it as \$900; the branch librarians each received a salary of \$600. The salaries of the Library staff totaled \$5,030 in 1914; slightly over \$4,000 was allocated for books and periodicals, and \$504, for supplies. Two years later the total Library budget was \$13,359.91 and that for the entire school system, \$379,311.72.¹⁷

Fifteen years after its opening, the Van Deusen Library was becoming overcrowded: shelving was inadequate for the new

acquisitions and it was necessary to discard a large number of books from the fiction shelves, both adult and juvenile. Many of these, however, the librarian assured the Board, dated from the foundation of the Library and almost no use had been made of them. Three years later she reported that the Library was being used more and more for reference purposes, and that the need for more room was felt to such an extent that it seemed almost impossible to carry on much longer under present conditions. There was not an empty shelf in the building, she went on to say; during busy seasons the reference room was packed to overflowing; and the repair department had to be moved from place to place.¹⁸

IV

When one reads Miss Roberts' last annual reports and looks at some of the other material available, it becomes evident that she was no longer able to cope with the administrative problems of the Library.

Some of the criticisms made in 1916 included the following: a variety of charging systems, a multiplicity of responsibility, lack of organization and easy accessibility to the book collection, books in the branches poorly adapted to use in school work as well as home reading, many mistakes and blunders made by people who tried to do library^{work} with little or no knowledge or training, most of the school branches needed more shelf space, or a more adequate library room, or both, and the catalog and accession book were not in order.

The above were some of the observations of Cecil A. Ross, contained in a letter written to Mrs. J. B. Balch, chairman of the Library Committee, Collegiate Alumnae. In his letter he also spoke of his attempts to straighten out the catalogue and accession book. The West Main School library, he further noted,

had been discontinued due to a lack of patronage and appreciation, but it should be reestablished, because it was in a fairly isolated and populous neighborhood. On the credit side, he had found that the East Avenue, North West Street and Portage School libraries were well located, in splendid order and well equipped.

Concerning the branch libraries, Ross made the following statements:

I have become thoroughly convinced during my last three months work with the branch libraries that they are very worthwhile in all schools as an aid to teachers and pupils and as neighborhood libraries. They allow parents a wider use of the school plant and keep the school in close touch neighborhood. Furthermore, I am convinced that they reach a field that the Main Library has never fathomed and would never fathom without branching out. It serves people who seldom move outside their neighborhood circle. 19

The principles that the writer expressed over half a century ago are still valid. Librarians are beginning to realize ~~more and more~~ that they must take the library to the people, for many of its potential patrons are not comfortable and at home in our "palatial" city libraries. They are unable to relate either to the buildings or to the people who frequent them.

Ross' official position is not stated in his letter; but he must have had ~~official~~ authorization of some kind, for it seems unlikely that he would have attempted to correct errors in the catalogue or accession book without administrative authority.

By the end of 1915, the Board of Education seems to have been convinced that the Public Library required reorganization and the book collection cataloging. On January 7, 1916, the secretary of the Library Committee was instructed to obtain "an estimate for the services of an expert cataloguer and organizer to place the Library in complete service." At the same meeting the committee was authorized to hire a Miss Napp to assist on the Holland books at fifteen cents an hour. At the March 7 meeting of the Board

the Library Committee recommended that Miss Mary F. Farr be notified that her services would be wanted to organize the work of the Public Library, beginning June 1, at a salary of \$150 a month.²⁰

Although the catalogue was felt to be inadequate, Fanny Kerr Hall did not recall that she ever had any difficulty with it. She also remembered Mary Farr as being a pleasant and competent person; Jeanne Griffin recalled that she went around making initial surveys of libraries and that she was a force in library circles. Miss Farr remained in Kalamazoo for about two years; under her direction the staff of the Library was reorganized, the rules for the loaning of books liberalized, and a complete card catalogue and card shelf list set up.²¹

In the spring of 1917 the United States entered the first World War. One would expect that this event would have been noted in the minutes of the Board of Education, but surprisingly little was said about it. Nor does it appear that the Library took an active part in the many civilian activities that were part of World War I scene.

Sometime during the early summer months of 1918, a call came from the War Department for books for the soldiers overseas. The Library gathered 1,200 books and shipped them as part of Kalamazoo's allotment of 5,000. In this connection, it might be interesting to note that the American Library Association placed 7,500,000 volumes into the war service, twice the number of books in the largest library in the world at that time; \$5,250,000 was collected for this work. For a number of reasons, which are not given, the Kalamazoo Public Library was unable to do much, but Miss Farr did collect \$240.39 in 1917 for this cause.²²

V

In February 1918 the Library was closed because of a coal

shortage, and Miss Roberts' own history states that she then retired from her position of head librarian. The very sparse minutes of the Board, however, seem to indicate a different situation.

During the latter part of December 1917, the Board had moved its offices from its rooms in the library building to the Peck House, just next door to the Library. At its first meeting in the new offices on January 4, 1918, the Library Committee recommended that Flora B. Roberts be employed as librarian of the "Public Libraries" and that Helen Subers be hired as temporary librarian until such a time as Miss Roberts could assume her duties.²³

One finds it strange that nowhere in the official minutes is there a word of commendation or appreciation for the many years of faithful and devoted service given to the Library by Isabella C. Roberts. For forty-five years she had served the Public Library, first, for a few years as assistant librarian, and then as head librarian. When she retired from that position, she spent six more years as head of the Art Department, making a total of fifty-one years.

In summing up Miss Roberts' contributions to the Kalamazoo Public Library, Jeanne Griffin said that the special collections, such as that of art, and the book collection as a whole, were her work.

Although she was connected with the Library for more than half its history, Miss Roberts remains a shadowy person. The older members of the staff, who have recently retired, remember seeing her, but have retained no definite impressions of her personality. An elderly man, who frequented the Library as a boy, recalled that she was quite insistent that everyone be quiet. Fannie Kerr Hall described her as a retiring person who kept out of sight as much as possible and who seldom waited at the desk; she was more .

interested in books and art than in administrative work. She was not aggressive and did little publicity work, Mrs. Hall also recalled, but was always friendly and easy to work with; especially did she remember the kindness and consideration which she received from Miss Roberts when she became a member of the library staff in 1910, and she spoke of the times when she would be invited to her home on the corner of Cedar and Rose Streets, where Miss Roberts would on occasion broil steaks in the furnace. Jeanne Griffin concurred in describing her as shy and retiring, but insisted that she had a definite personality.²⁴

Perhaps the best summation of her devotion and services to the Library was expressed by her successor, Flora B. Roberts, when she wrote:

Through long, lean years she had stood at her post; cramped quarters, small book funds, and inadequate tools had been her portion. But her love of good books and interest in her service never failed.²⁵

VI. (THE STATE LIBRARY)

In 1895 the Michigan Legislature passed a law which provided that any public or incorporated, or college library, having not less than a thousand dollars, could become associated with the State Library. This law also made provision for traveling libraries, but the funds for this service were meager, the supply of books small and the demand for them great. Women's study groups were also permitted to get books from the State Library, and individuals had access to it through their associated libraries.²⁶

A year later Mary C. Spencer, State Librarian, described the services authorized by the law more fully. She wrote that there were now twenty associated libraries in the State and that the traveling libraries consisted of fifty carefully chosen titles, about one-fifth of them fiction and the balance equally divided

among ethics, religion, literature, biography, history and travel. They ~~libraries~~ were intended for the use of the residents in small villages and rural districts, and a library could be obtained upon the application of twenty-five taxpayers in a rural district--a grange, a farmer's club, or, in fact, any society organized for study. The books ~~in a traveling library~~ could be kept for a period of three to six months and the yearly fee for this service was five dollars. In 1896 there were one hundred of these libraries circulating in the State. Michigan had the proud distinction of being the second state in the nation to establish the traveling library system, New York State being the first. There were also twenty-five special *collections*, made up for the use of study groups working in the isolated sections of the State, in use at this time.

Mrs. Spencer concluded her letter by saying:

With a noble library of nearly a hundred thousand books as a center and with the associate and traveling library systems reaching to the extreme limits of the state and all accessible to the humblest citizens, the condition of the Michigan state library, may be considered ideal.²⁷

At a meeting of the National Association of State Librarians held in 1898 it was determined that Michigan stood second in the United States among state libraries, in "scope, completeness, and usefulness being exceeded only by New York." The fact that the Michigan State Library was taken out of politics in 1859 may have been partially responsible for this accomplishment.²⁸

A year later the Michigan Legislature created the State Board of Library Commissioners. The purpose of this board was to encourage the establishment and effectiveness of free public libraries. It held its first meeting in Detroit on November 23, 1898, and Ex-Governor Cyrus G. Luce was its first president. The secretary of the board was instructed to open correspondence with influential residents of cities and villages having no public libraries.

In a letter written to the superintendent of schools, Mary C. Spencer stated that

The object of this action on the part of the Board was to awaken a desire for public libraries and to devise ways and means by which such libraries can be established and supported. The movement is in the interest of broader culture and higher education and for the purpose of counteracting by the introduction of good books the dangerous influence of much of the literature which is flooding the State.

Among the inducements made to cities and villages to encourage them to establish public libraries were the following:

1. Furnishing lists of books selected with the greatest care and of the highest literary character, and securing, if desired by the purchasers, the highest possible discount on the purchases.
2. Giving advice as to the classification, cataloguing, and arrangement of books on the shelves; in fact, furnishing information in all details of library economy.
3. The State Librarian will provide for admission into the State Library, for a limited time, of men and women who may be appointed librarians of the free public libraries. (The instruction was limited to the practical training and the elementary details of library work.
4. Public free and incorporated libraries would be furnished by the State with a valuable set of books called "The Pioneer and Historical Society Collections of Michigan," the set now numbering twenty-seven volumes.
5. All free public libraries having one thousand books, other than State and Federal Government documents, may become associated with the State Library, and all State documents would be sent directly to the public libraries. Associate libraries would also have the privilege of borrowing from the State Library those books which their patrons might wish to use for a limited time.

One aim of the State Library and other well established libraries was to encourage the reading of travel, history and biographical materials; the general reading of fiction was deplored. This became evident in a circular prepared by the secretary of the State Board of Library Commissioners in which it was stated that

It has been proven beyond denial by experienced librarians that with a careful selection of books and a librarian who is interested in the work readers can gradually be led from the use of fiction alone to that of travels, biography and history.²⁸

The State Board of Library Commissioners, in order to promote and facilitate the better training of those who were in charge of libraries, sponsored a Michigan Summer School for Library Training in 1908. The program included courses in cataloging, administrative details, book selection and classification and other related subjects. The school was held in the Senate chamber and adjoining rooms of the Capitol in Lansing, and there were twenty-six students in attendance, thirteen of whom took the full course, representing sixteen towns.

A children's librarian was also engaged to prepare for the use of the schools ~~and the use of the schools~~ and the commissioners a list of five hundred children's books as a first selection for small public libraries.²⁹

Four years earlier the first library institute in the State had been held in Kalamazoo, its chairman hoping for an attendance of twelve. Including Mr. Uttley of Detroit, Miss Waldo from Jackson, Miss Phoebe Parker from the Sage Library, West Bay, and Miss Walton, the chairman, all of whom had paid their own expenses for two days, the attendance was "somewhere around nine or ten."³⁰

The significant improvement in the services that the State Library offered to the people and libraries of Michigan during this period was due largely to the efforts and vision of Mary C. Spencer, who became State Librarian in 1893. When she assumed the office, the State Library was a magnificent collection of books, but the people of Michigan received little or no benefit from it. It has been well said that "Mrs. Spencer literally removed the door and the locks from the cases and placed the books in circulation throughout the State." She was State Librarian until August 1923.³¹

(OTHER LIBRARIES IN MICHIGAN)

In 1899 the public libraries of Michigan were few in number and their holdings sparse, with but a few exceptions. There were no really large libraries in the State; the largest one was the Detroit Public Library with approximately 140,000 volumes. The other larger libraries were the library of the University of Michigan, with less than 100,000 volumes, and the State Library with 65,000. The second largest public library was that of Grand Rapids with 41,000 volumes.

The following is a list of the larger libraries in the State and their holdings: Adrian Public School, 12,836; Bay City Public, 15,966; Clarke Public Library, Coldwater, 13,585; Jackson Free Public, 16,144; Kalamazoo Public, 22,300; Muskegon Hackley, 21,412; Olivet College, 25,000; Sage Public of West Bay City, 25,000; and Saginaw Hoyt Public, 24,000.³²

Besides the Public Library, the other libraries in Kalamazoo were the library of Kalamazoo College with 5,966 volumes; the County Law Library, 1,400; the Ladies Library Association, 3,854; and the Michigan Female Seminary, 2,000 volumes.

There were, however, many libraries in the State, but most of them were too small to be effective. The statistics for Allegan and Kalamazoo Counties will serve to illustrate the conditions that obtained in many other counties of the State.

Allegan County had 156 libraries, with holdings ranging from one volume to 1,115 for the Otsego Township Library. There were sixty-six libraries with less than fifty volumes, thirty-five with one hundred or more, and five with over five hundred volumes. These were school, township and village libraries and their holdings totaled 13,594 volumes.

Kalamazoo County had ninety-five libraries, with holdings

ranging from two to 29,672 volumes. There were forty-three libraries with less than fifty volumes, twenty-four with one hundred or more, and four with over 599 volumes. The total number of volumes in these libraries was 40,969.³³

VIII (SCHOOL LIBRARIES IN MICHIGAN)

Although Michigan was the first state in the union to provide in its constitution for libraries as part of its educational system, the development of school libraries was a slow and uneven process. In 1893 the Superintendent of Public Instruction observed that "Many of the libraries we happen to know consist of dust covered, worm-eaten public documents, reports of state officers, and other soul-stirring literature of this kind."

He continued:

Now what is needed is a well selected working library in each school, to be kept in the school house in a neat case prepared for it, to be kept under the control of the teacher, and to be used^{as} as a circulating library in the district so much as a reference library and an inspiration to the pupils of the school. The new method of teaching history and geography absolutely requires some books of supplementary matter.³⁴

The above statement marks the beginning of the concept of the modern school library. From this time on talks and declarations on its character and the best ways to obtain and develop such a facility in the schools became common. An editorial in the Michigan School Moderator urged the teachers, if the district wouldn't buy a library for the school, to

get up an entertainment, have a social, give penny readings, try a spelling match with a collection annex, sell eggs, shovel snow, pile wood, do janitor work, clean the school house--in some way buy a few good and interesting books as a start for a working school library.³⁵

Probably the first investigation into the number of school libraries was the one sponsored by the Michigan Schoolmasters Club in 1906/07. The returns from nearly a hundred questionnaires indicated that there were but a few reference books or indexes in the

schools, and that while a few school libraries received periodicals, very few preserved them.³⁶

By 1912 the school librarians had become aware of their role and importance, and in that year the Library Section of the Michigan State Teachers' Association, meeting in Grand Rapids, unanimously adopted the following set of resolutions concerning their position:

Whereas, since the position of school librarians, in many places is not yet recognized as requiring the educational qualifications, nor is recompensed with the salary of teachers, and

Whereas, the demands made upon such a position, its possible value to educational growth, its educational breadth, and its direction of reading as culture, are equal to the responsibilities of any other teacher, be it therefore

Resolved, that the Library Section of the Michigan State Teachers' Association express itself as recognizing the educational value and growth of library work, and, when such work involves teaching the use of books as tools, directing the policy of the library, that the position be recognized as equivalent to that of a supervisor of any other special subject, or at least to that of a high-school teacher of the local system.³⁷

The first general survey of school libraries in Michigan was conducted in 1917. Questionnaires were sent to all school superintendents of the State and 216 replies were received. They were from thirteen full-time and ninety-seven part-time school librarians, eighty-four school librarians who also served as public librarians and twenty-one public librarians who acted as school librarians. The salaries paid these librarians ranged from \$400 to \$1,100, the expenditures of their libraries, from zero dollars to \$1,000, and the number of volumes in these libraries, from two hundred to ten thousand. Instruction in the use of the library was given systematically by eighteen percent of the librarians, incidentally by forty-eight, and not at all by thirty-four percent.³⁸

Although both public and school libraries still had a long ways to go, a good foundation had been laid for their future development.

Chapter 11

THE ERA OF FLORA B. ROBERTS: 1918-1942

I

We do not know how or when the Library Committee of the Board of Education became aware of Flora B. Roberts' qualifications and of her interest in a position with the Kalamazoo Public Library. Although it is likely that most of the members of the Board realized that the Library required reorganization, it was Mrs. Harriet McCalmont Stone, one of its members, who strongly promoted new leadership.

After Miss Roberts was first contacted, there evidently was a period of negotiation. There may also have been some discussion of the advisability of placing the Library under the jurisdiction of the superintendent of schools. Regardless of the seriousness of this discussion, Jeanne Griffin asserted that Miss Roberts gave as one of her conditions for accepting the position of head librarian that she continue to be responsible to the Board of Education and not to the superintendent of schools. And all of her reports indicate definitely that she worked within the framework of the Board's policies and seldom if ever mentioned the superintendent of schools.¹

Flora B. Roberts, even though she never received her library degree, was one of the best qualified librarians in the nation. She attended Drexel Institute in Philadelphia, leaving there in

1899 for Northwestern University, becoming its first cataloger. Two years later she went to what is now Michigan State University and stayed there five years. At this time she was the only trained librarian at the college, all of the others being political appointees. Her greatest achievement here was the setting up of the college's catalog system. After leaving Michigan, she returned to Drexel to teach cataloging; then she was head librarian at Superior, Wisconsin, for five years and was also instrumental in starting the library at Le Peer, Wisconsin. When she accepted the position at the Kalamazoo Public Library, she was engaged in library work in Missouri.

Miss Roberts knew many of the pioneers of professional librarianship in the United States: she was acquainted with Melvil Dewey and had danced with Charles Ammi Cutter at an American Library Association conference. She herself was a pioneer of the profession in Michigan and did much for its development in the State.

Her leadership and vision left an impress on the Kalamazoo Library System that is still with it. It can well be said that before she came the Library was a collection of books; under her administration it became a library.

II

Her first report to the Board of Education indicated her awareness of the needs and shortcomings of the Library and her determination to exert herself to the utmost to secure for it what was needed. She saw as her outstanding task the unification and cementing of the library system. She described the Library as being plagued by a small staff, limited funds and the growing demands of the public. In her first annual report she noted that much of the work had fallen behind, that temporary makeshifts had been

resorted to all too often, and that there was little cohesion in the system. Such conditions, she pointed out, always mean a day of reckoning. The accession book, shelf list and catalog were so incomplete and inaccurate, she continued, that they were nearly unusable; the whole collection of some 50,000 volumes had to be recorded and recataloged and since the register of borrowers was also inadequate, it too had to be reorganized.²

The work of reorganizing the Library collection continued during the following decade. By January 1920, Miss Roberts was able to report that the books in the fields of medicine, engineering, agriculture, household economy and business had been largely recataloged. Six years later she said that all of the technical records were up to date, except for the old task of recataloging, which had been begun by Mary Farr in the summer of 1916, and in 1929 she reported that the work of recataloging ~~the Library's~~ ~~holdings~~ had been completed.³

Although the simple classification schedules that were adopted in the 1920's are no longer altogether practical, yet when they are compared with those existing in many other libraries, it becomes evident that the system followed by the Kalamazoo Public Library is one that is easily used by the patron. The schedules were kept simple, too simple it is true, when one considers the complexities of present-day knowledge and the multitudinous products of the book publishing industry, but similar materials were kept together, even though violence had to be done to Dewey. The Library user was not forced to wander over the shelves to find the books he wanted, for to a great degree books on the same general topics were classified together.

This pragmatic approach was definitely not consistent with

the schedules of the Dewey Decimal Classification, which has occasionally posed problems for present-day catalogers. The recataloging process that was completed in the late 1920's placed the books in the fields of international organization, marriage, vocational guidance, alcoholism and drug addiction in the ethical category. The Kalamazoo Public Library, it has been facetiously said, often takes the ethical approach to many matters of sociological concern. Another awkward deviation was the placing of materials on floriculture, gardening in general and flower arrangement in the landscape architecture number.

Competent assistants ~~were~~ probably the greatest need of the Library at this time. Miss Roberts wrote, "My chief function seems to be writing letters to secure assistants." Not only was there a great scarcity of librarians, but those who were available, she remarked, all seemed to want the salary of the chief librarian. Although she wrote many letters, her efforts to secure competent help were at first unsuccessful, and it was necessary to close the three branches, Portage, East and Northwest, for three days in the week during July and August.⁴

Since library assistants were so difficult to obtain, a class in library methods was begun on June 26, 1918. The class sessions continued for a month and featured both class instruction and practical work. The purpose of these classes was to provide training for young people, almost invariably women, who were interested in library work, and many of the Public Library's librarians during the past fifty years received their initial training here.⁵

One of the fundamental tenets of Miss Roberts' philosophy was that the library should provide every possible service to the community. She soon realized that the Library was not reaching

a large part of the community, especially the business and laboring men, and that if novel readers, students and club women were dropped from the list of readers, there would be very few left. At this time only seventeen percent of the population of Kalamazoo were registered as Library users, their number totaling 9,359, of whom 2,985 were children.⁶

III

In order to encourage people to use the Library, much more freedom was given to its patrons: they were permitted to enter the stacks and select their books, an open desk was installed and the old metal grills were removed, and the hours that the Library was open were increased, so that by 1927 it was open thirteen hours a day. Some of its materials were also made more readily accessible. As early as the fall of 1918, Miss Roberts and Jeanne Griffin, who had joined the staff in April as her assistant, began to collect books on business and technical subjects for the benefit of the men of the city. These books were later placed in the reading room, although the original plan had been for an alcove off this room.⁷

If the people did not come to the Library, then, the new librarian believed, the Library must go to the people; for this reason book shelves were placed at the YMCA, the YWCA and the Upjohn Company in January 1919, and the Rosenbaum Company had also requested shelves. Some years later book collections were placed in the fire stations and hospital service was also initiated. Library service at Bronson Hospital was begun on February 11, 1930, and at the end of the first three weeks, 298 books and periodicals had been loaned.⁸

Letters were sent to every returning soldier and sailor--a letter of welcome and an offer of the services of the Public

Library.⁹

From the very beginning of her work at Kalamazoo, Miss Roberts had been convinced that if the Library was to grow, its services had to be publicized. Undoubtedly as the result of her solicitation, the Gazette began to publish lists, with annotations, of the new books in the Library. The books listed were displayed for a week before being put into circulation, which practice, she later reported, had led to an "astounding and almost appalling number of requests" for the reserving of books.¹⁰

Until 1927 Miss Roberts herself was the public relations officer for the Library, but she was aware that she would be unable to care for its publicity needs adequately and an extension librarian was added to the staff. This person, however, does not appear to have been a success, and it was necessary to look further. In the fall of that same year, Eleanor Ricker joined the staff as extension librarian. For the next fifteen years Miss Ricker was also responsible for Library publicity, and anyone who will take the time to glance at the files of the Kalamazoo Gazette will realize that the Library received more publicity during these years than it had previously or would subsequently. She also had charge of the books collections at the fire stations and the hospital service.

Although the new librarian's chief concern was the improvement of the Library and its services, she did not neglect her staff. Soon after her arrival she brought before the Board her conviction that the salaries of librarians and teachers were "notoriously inadequate." In December 1919 she recommended that staff salaries be paid on December 20, for this, she said, "would be greatly appreciated by our staff as a whole." A few months later she made the further recommendation that the vacation of Library employees

be changed from three weeks to four weeks, as this, she said, was customary in nearly all progressive libraries. The Board, however, did not accept her suggestion, nor did it approve when she repeated her recommendation a year later.¹¹

Inequalities in staff salaries also disturbed her. In April 1921 she protested that the janitor ~~of the Library~~ was a most willing worker, but that he was so mentally deficient that she herself was forced to carry the responsibility for his work, and ~~that~~ he was paid a salary of \$1,887.60, one that was greater than that received by Jeanne Griffin, the assistant librarian.¹²

Miss Roberts was always interested in the welfare of her staff. More adequate salaries, as has already been mentioned, continued to be a matter of concern, but the comfort of ~~its members of the library staff~~ was also important. By the spring of 1927, a staff room had been furnished where they could rest at noon or night when they were off duty. Nor did she neglect their social needs; picnics and other affairs were soon begun, and there often was a Christmas party with a yule log and all of the other trimmings. Of the fall picnic held at Oakwood in October 1919, she wrote ~~in~~ that "There were no casualties to report."¹³

Librarians who worked under her have often remarked how close knit the staff was in those days and how they felt themselves to be members of one large family. On the other hand, however, there were some who ^{felt} that her interest in their personal lives was too inquisitive or interfering. Miss Roberts also believed that the members of her staff should be involved in community affairs, and some of them thought that her ideas in this matter were too dictatorial. But most of the Library employees, to judge from the statements of those who worked under her for many years, appreciated greatly

her ability and devotion and some of them were so loyal to her principles and methods that they had difficulty adjusting to those of her successors.

The professional competence of the staff was also a matter of concern. Staff members like Lillian Anderson, Helen Fraser, Lois Ingling, Jeanetta Sagers and Marian Schrier, who had joined the staff as girls or young women in the early or mid-twenties, were strongly encouraged to get their professional training, so that by 1935 most of the key members of the staff had library degrees.

Regular staff meetings were begun in 1920. Outside speakers were the rule at these meetings and in 1920, at least, their talks seem to concentrate on politics. How often these meetings were held in the beginning is not known, but by 1927/28 they were held weekly.¹⁴

Miss Roberts and her staff also found time for some extracurricular community services. On New Year's Day, 1919, for example, four of the librarians took the early interurban car to Battle Creek and then went to Camp Custer where they spent the day classifying the new vocational books in the camp's library.¹⁵

IV

Through the years the close relationship that has existed between the public school system and the Public Library has occasionally presented problems. Early in the fall of 1918, a question of discipline arose in one of the branch libraries: Who had the ultimate authority in a branch library? The principal of the school building or the branch librarian? Miss Roberts suggested to the Board that future misunderstandings might be avoided if it took action on this question. What action, if any, the Board took is

not recorded.

Some years later a situation, which was described as an "annoying confusion," developed in the branches located in the school buildings. The problem arose when the principal of the school would schedule an activity in the library room without consulting the librarian in charge. Miss Roberts then asked the Board to rule that the room used for the library should not be used for any other purposes without first consulting the librarian in charge. She also urged it to consider the needs of the library when new school buildings were being planned.¹⁶

During the mid-twenties classroom libraries were established in those schools that had no branch libraries, and these classroom collections were popular and well used.¹⁷

The largest and most important school library was that of the high school. The high school, which had had a library of sorts from 1860 until the late 1870's, had been without this facility until 1912/1913. Then through the efforts of Miss Annie D. Clarke, a teacher of English, and Miss Sarah Elder and others, the library was reestablished. Besides books, the number of which is unknown, there was also a collection of mounted pictures, travel folders, magazines, pictures, slides, photographs and stereographs. In 1913 a reading room was established in Room 45, which was on the second floor just over the entrance on Westnedge Avenue. Then the books, to the number of 2,000 or more, were brought to the reading room from the various classrooms and the work of accessioning and cataloging was begun. Until the spring of 1924, the library was under the jurisdiction of the administration of Central High School.

With the completion of the present Old Central High building the library was moved into rooms on the third floor, which it

occupied until the winter of 1971/72, when the school was moved to the new building on Drake Road. During the summer vacation of 1924, the library was made a branch of the Public Library and Miss Bessie Jane Reed was appointed librarian of the "new high school branch," at a salary of \$2,000 a year. Her duties included the instruction of the apprentice class and assisting at the Public Library on Saturdays. When school opened in the fall, there were around four thousand "completely organized books" on the shelves of Central High School's library. Miss Reed served as librarian until 1952, when she retired.¹⁸

During these years, the public schools of the district made extensive use of the facilities and services offered by the Public Library. Miss Roberts reported that in October 1931, sixty-two teachers had been supplied with special collections from the Van Deusen Room, the children's department.¹⁹

There was also good cooperation between the Public Library and the libraries of Kalamazoo College and Western Normal School. These libraries borrowed books from one another, and students from both of the colleges came to the Public Library in large numbers. The newly equipped Kalamazoo College Library was opened in 1930, but this, Miss Roberts reported, did not result in any diminution of the Library's work with these students.²⁰

V

In 1925 the Public Library became the depository of visual education materials, not only for the community, but also for the schools. Since that day its audio-visual materials have been extensively used by the schools of the community. Four years later ~~the Public Library~~ became the first public library in the nation to provide moving picture film service.²¹

The acceptance of the new administration's policies and its

efforts to broaden the services offered by the Public Library to the community was reflected in the registration and circulation statistics. In 1928 nearly forty-four percent of the population of Kalamazoo were registered as Library users, which figure compares very favorably with the seventeen percent of 1918. During the year 1927/28, the total circulation was 445,343 volumes, or eight per capita. There were now 88,000 books in the Library, of which twenty-eight percent were juvenile; thirty-seven percent of the children's books and sixty-two of the adult books loaned were fiction. Over eight thousand books were added to the collection during the year and 3,125 volumes were discarded; the average cost of the books purchased was \$1.59. Besides the book loans, over ten thousand reference questions were answered, and it should be noted that the Art Department of the Library also circulated 21,000 lantern slides and 171 pictures.²²

During the first seven years of Miss Roberts' administration, the total Library budget increased eighty-five percent, salaries, 144, and circulation services, ninety-one percent. Fifty-nine percent of the budget was for salaries, twenty for books and twenty-two for general expenses. By 1927 the staff numbered twenty full-time members.²³

As the services provided by the Library increased, it became evident that the Van Deusen Building could no longer provide room for expansion. By 1925 it was so crowded that Miss Roberts said that something had to be done if the Library were to continue to grow; several months later she reported that the saturation point had been reached. In her annual report of 1924/25 she had recommended the purchase of the Peck House, just south of the Library. In June of the following year, the voters of the school district approved the purchase of this property. This building was called

the Library House and in April 1927 the Art Department of the Library was moved into it.²⁴

Although the significant growth in the use of the Library gratified her, Miss Roberts believed that its facilities and services should be further expanded. It was her conviction that Kalamazoo should also have a museum and art gallery. As early as 1923, she declared that this was one of the urgent needs of the city. But not until the purchase of the Peck House could this dream be realized. By the end of 1927, most of the museum materials, which had been accumulating since the 1880's and had been stored in the basement of the Library, were moved to the Library House and scrubbed clean.

The Museum, which grew rapidly, largely because a number of Kalamazoo residents, notably A. M. Todd, were generous with their gifts and loans, immediately became very popular. In the spring of 1928, Miss Roberts visited a number of great museums and upon her return to Kalamazoo, she reported that the Kalamazoo Museum ranked first in cleanness, vitality, Indian baskets and Chinese musical instruments. She also believed that it already possessed the nucleus of an effective school service department. Mrs. Mary E. Palmer was the first curator of the Museum.²⁵

Early in 1929 the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts opened negotiations with the Board of Education concerning the feasibility of its combining with the Kalamazoo Museum. The Board approved the merger in April and the Institute of Arts formally accepted the contract in October. In the contract the Board of Education agreed to provide a suitable place for the Institute's collections and to administer its funds and endowments. This union, which lasted for nearly twenty years, was not an entirely happy one.

The merger of the two institutions was known as the Kalamazoo Museum and Art Institute.²⁶

The establishment of the Museum and its merger with the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts found the Library again short of room. By the spring of 1928, both the Van Deusen Library and the Library House had become very crowded, and the Board was urged to build an addition to the former. A year later the Kauffer property, on the corner of Lovell and Rose, was acquired for \$60,000. Forty thousand dollars of this sum was the gift of Dr. W. E. Upjohn. For a while the purchase of the Kauffer House relieved the crowded conditions of the Library building and the Library House.²⁷

A new building for the Portage Branch was another sign of growth in the library system. By 1919 this branch had outgrown the school building in which it had been housed and was moved to a store on Portage Street, but seven years later this location too was no longer adequate. In 1923 the Board had purchased an irregular shaped piece of property in a shopping center on the edge of the celery fields. Construction of a new building for the Portage Branch was begun in November 1926 and it was dedicated the following year. The building, which is of Old English design, is made of tapestry brick with limestone trimming and with two-toned slate on the gabled roof. It cost \$50,000, and has been known ever since as the Washington Square Branch.

In their work on the American Public Library, Wheeler and Gittens made the following interesting comment:

An unusual difficulty is rather brilliantly solved in the Washington Square Branch, a narrow inner lot whose side lines carry back diagonally from the street. The temptation is to build parallel and at right angles to the side lines, but this never looks well in the street. Here the reading rooms are set en echelon parallel and at right angles to the street, and the difficulty changed into an asset by a clever arrangement of the entrance...²⁸

VI

During the second week of October 1922, Kalamazoo celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the Public Library. An exhibit at the First National Bank publicized some of its work, and receptions were held at the Central Library, as the Van Deusen Building was usually designated during this period, and the three branches. The ladies of the Ladies Library Association were hostesses at an open house held in the main library. Demonstrations of library work were also conducted. The Kalamazoo Gazette summed up the progress of the past fifty years:

Half a century has brought many changes in Kalamazoo, but it will be of interest to the public to know that in order to contrast the present commodious building with the first one, they have only to go up a flight of stairs and survey the interior of the room in which the city commission holds its deliberations.²⁹

For over fifty years gifts and memorials have added many useful and beautiful books to the Library's collection. One of the first memorials was a group of books, prints and book plates presented by the Art Club of Kalamazoo in memory of Mary McKee. In the presentation it was noted that Miss McKee had given tirelessly of her services to the club members of the city.³⁰

Five years later the Child Welfare League gave the Library \$200, the income from this money to be used to purchase books on the well being of children. This was the first gift of money to be used as an endowment and Miss Roberts hoped that more money would be forthcoming.³¹

There were a number of personnel changes during the twenties. Miss Hughes, who had become Director of Work with Children during the year 1923/24, resigned in 1926. She was succeeded by ~~Miss~~ Louise Singley, who retained that position until her resignation

in 1954. Miss Singley brought the work in the Children's Room to a high level of professional competence. She was also highly respected and well liked by her fellow staff members.

Isabella C. Roberts was forced to give up her work in the Art Department because of ill health in the fall of 1924. Miss Roberts died on January 16, 1933, at the age of eighty-eight, leaving her property on the corner of Cedar and South Rose Streets to the Young Women's Christian Association.³²

In the fall of 1921, the name of the Children's Room was changed to the Van Deusen Room, in honor of the donors of the library building. This name was kept until the Library was moved into its new building in 1959, when the name was changed to the Boys and Girls Department. (In 1972, however, the name of Children's Room was again in favor.) The name Van Deusen was then transferred to the beautiful auditorium in the new building, and the name is also memorialized on a bronze plaque that has been placed on the wall near one of the doors leading into the room.

Miss Roberts strongly believed that local history materials were an important part of a library collection, and in 1929 she informed the Board that a vertical file for local history items was needed. The work of organizing the newspaper clippings was begun in February of that same year and is still an important function of the Library's Reference Department. The Local History Room today contains an invaluable collection of books, documents, newspaper clippings and pictures on the history of Kalamazoo and the State of Michigan.³³

Five years earlier she had learned that the first ten volumes of the Kalamazoo Gazette, covering the years 1837-1847 were in the possession of the descendants of H. Gilbert and could be

bought for \$500. She recommended to the Board that the Library assist to the extent of \$100 in the purchase of these volumes if it were necessary. The following spring \$400 was received in gifts with which to buy these early issues, and through the years they have been of great value in the study of the early history of Kalamazoo.³⁴

Although most of the librarian's reports indicated progress on almost all fronts, the Library was not without its problems. The most critical one, as has already been mentioned, was that of space, especially for the Reference Department. Toward the end of the decade, Miss Griffin, the reference librarian, complained the the quiet, which was conducive to real study, was not possible under present conditions.

Vandalism was getting to be a serious problem. In reporting this situation, Miss Roberts said:

But the problem of vandalism by students who mutilate the costly tools (Reference works) makes one skeptical about the age in which we live. Two pages in Pasteur, a popular school subject of the past year, were torn from our new expensive Encyclopaedia Britannica."

And her plaint has been echoed and re-echoed through the years by other librarians.

She also reported to the Board that the discipline problem in the main library was becoming a grave matter, and that lawlessness and impudence were increasing among young people of high school age. If this problem continued, it would be necessary to employ "a man of muscle and judgment for police duty at the Central Library and Library House." Then she expressed her resentment "that these self-centered, lawless, and impudent young people should take the joy from my job and life." ³⁵

VII

Early in 1921 Miss Roberts told the Board of Education that among the far-reaching projects that it should consider were a building for the Portage Branch, county library service and hospital service. The Board, however, was too engrossed in a million-dollar building program for the schools and apparently unable to give adequate consideration to the problems and needs of the Library. Whereupon she commented that it was asking a great deal of the volunteer services of a number of citizens to administer two distinct institutions, especially as each one had reached some degree of importance in its own field. For this reason Kalamazoo needed an organization whose members would be known in the community as the Library Board. With the exception of Kansas City, she noted, every city of any size which had started out with the library under the Board of Education had now come to a separate library board.³⁶

As the school system of Kalamazoo has grown and its needs and problems have multiplied, individuals connected with the Library and school system have questioned the ability of the Board of Education to cope adequately with the different demands of both institutions. Members of the Library staff have felt at times that the very magnitude of the school system has prevented the Board from giving the Library the attention it required. The Kalamazoo Public Library has made much progress during the past sixty years. Whether it would have shown greater development with a board of its own is a question that will remain unanswerable.

For many years residents of both the city and county of Kalamazoo have felt that the Public Library should be the core of a county-wide library system. As has already been mentioned, Miss Roberts, as early as 1921, had urged the Board to consider county

library service. She informed them that a State law provided that the county supervisors might enter into a contract with an existing library in the county for service and that scores of counties had already done so. Then she asked, "When shall Kalamazoo join this forward movement? More time and attention and funds will be needed." Three years later she presented the matter of a county library to the Board of Supervisors, but it took no action. Nearly fifty more years elapsed before the "forward Movement" that she had recommended was implemented.³⁷

Although Miss Roberts devoted most of her time and energy to the broadening and development of the services and facilities of the Library, she still found time for outside activities. In the fall of 1923, the Michigan Library Association met in Kalamazoo for its annual convention. Apparently in conjunction with this event, Miss Roberts and other librarians of the State attempted to persuade the Governor to appoint a professional librarian to succeed Mary C. Spencer, who had given able direction to the State Library for many years, but their efforts were fruitless. In her December report Miss Roberts deplored the fact that the Governor had made the appointment of the State Librarian on purely political grounds in spite of all of the exertions of the librarians of the State.³⁸ In 1921 she had been president of the Michigan Library Association.

In January 1929 she was named a member of the Executive Committee of the Kalamazoo Centennial and Mrs. Palmer, curator of the Museum, a member of the Committee of Historical Exhibits. The Museum was designated as a place of deposit of items to be loaned for the centennial celebration and the use of the old Kauffer House was secured for the collection of these loans.³⁹

VIII

At the beginning of the decade of the thirties, there had

been some hope that a new library building would be realized in the foreseeable future. Representatives of a number of architectural firms called on the librarian to discuss the outlines of a new building, but the depression, that by mid 1931 was making its restrictive effects felt on the economy of the city, brought all such prospects and discussions to a halt.⁴⁰

It was during the depression years that thousands of people, who had never been in a library previously, turned to books for help and comfort. By the summer of 1931, forty-seven of the residents of Kalamazoo were registered as active borrowers, and sixty-six percent of the adult reading was non-fiction. A man who had lived in the city for sixty-two years requested and borrowed a book. Miss Roberts reported that the "world's misfortune has led to a decided increase in our work." During 1930/31 nearly 628,000 books were borrowed, an increase of nearly eighty percent since 1926; the following year book loans totaled 660,900 and the year after that, 716,348 volumes.

So great were the demands placed upon the Library, that she told the Board, "Our prosperity during November (1931) reminds me of the position in which the praying woman put the Lord when she said, 'We come to Thee, for we have nowhere else to go.'" ⁴¹

By the beginning of 1933, the depression was forcing the Board to resort to grim economies. On March 15 it was announced that no more books would be purchased during the remainder of the fiscal year. This cutback, however, did not begin to provide sufficient funds for the operation of the Library and in June Miss Roberts made public plans for a 38-hour week and a twenty-five percent cut in gross salary costs. She recommended that the salary cut be applied with some variations up and down so that "the result would

place only 44 percent of the staff of 25 at incomes of less than \$1200." College seniors who were working at the Library had their wages cut from fifty to forty cents an hour. A few positions were also eliminated and there was no payroll for the month of April.

For two years at least the salaries of the teachers of the school system had been reduced, and then on April 28, 1933, it was announced that the salaries of all employees of the Board of Education were to be diminished by twenty-five percent for the next fiscal year, except that a minimum of \$1000 was established.⁴²

At this time Miss Roberts asked for a small sum with which to purchase an electric plate for the staff room, and it is pleasant to read that the Board was able to approve this expenditure.⁴³

The discontinuance of book purchases displeased the patrons of the Library, especially the readers of fiction, for there were no new fiction titles available. Nevertheless, book loans continued to show gains until the beginning of 1934. Not until June 1934, was the Library again able to new titles. In 1933/34 only 1,790 books were purchased; during the previous year the new acquisitions totaled 5,679. The total accessions for the year were 5,295, but 5,692 books were discarded and more should have been. The new fiction was placed in a rental collection.

Speaking of the effect that the lack of book purchases would have on the Library, Miss Roberts said:

Were our funds of the immediate future to return to normal, it would take years of careful buying to round out our book collection from its warped and depleted state due to lack of purchases this year....⁴⁴

The decrease in book circulation, which began in early 1934, was due not only to the lack of new books, but also to a loss in borrowers, because many who had been Library users were now

required to pay fees because they lived outside the school district. Hours of service were also reduced; the Central Library, the Library House and Washington Square Branch were closed on Thursday in the interest of economy. Hospital service was also curtailed and it was no longer possible to hold the weekly staff meetings. About the only bright note in the 1933/34 annual report was that the walls of the Library had been cleaned by CWA workers. This was the third time that the Van Deusen Library had been redecorated and the first time in twenty-five years; this work cost the Library \$116.⁴⁵

By 1935 the Library was beginning to recover from the effects of the depression; nearly 7,000 books were bought during 1935/36 and the book stock totaled 117,601 volumes. Circulation, however, was down to 564,020, as compared to a high of 717,000 in 1932/33, but the circulation of audio-visual materials continued to grow, exceeding 450,000 items. The Reference Department was also busy, answering 18,000 questions. The total budget now exceeded \$73,000. Another indication of the return to normalcy was the resumption of the apprentice class with five members.⁴⁶

During this period workers from the various federal recovery programs were of great assistance to the Library. The CWA, NYA and WPA assistants did much to maintain and improve its service; they mended books, did typing, conditioned and assembled museum exhibits, and gave the books, magazines and documents a thorough cleaning and dusting. With their aid over 23,000 books were mended. Their assistance also made it possible to open school stations at Parkwood and Hillcrest in place of the previous classroom collections. In 1935/36 there were twenty-nine of these federal workers and the number of hours they worked totaled nearly

9,700. Two of them were book menders.

The contribution of these federal assistants to the Museum was especially important. Nine fine display cases were built, the Museum supplying the glass and tools and the WPA, the wood, hardware, backgrounds and labor. Besides these cases, seventy-six wooden boxes, two large chests of drawers, two stall cases holding sixty framed pictures and 260 feet of shelving were constructed. There were now 1,327 loan collections, an increase of 121.

The artists of the recovery program also made six habitat groups, two miniature dioramas, and painted and mounted 221 bird plates, plus repainting many other articles. In addition to the above accomplishments, all the Museums letters were typed, the files, records and catalog maintained, and an index prepared by the WPA assistants.⁴⁷

IX

By the mid 1930's, space which had been a serious lack for nearly two decades was a truly critical problem. Early in January 1937, Miss Roberts asserted that the Central Library, after forty-five years of use, had become completely outgrown.

In September of that same year, Forrest B. Spaulding of the Des Moines Public Library and a member of the executive committee of the American Library Association, surveyed the Kalamazoo Public Library. In his report to the Board, he stated that ~~its~~ staff ~~of the Library~~ comprised a higher percentage of trained and experienced individuals than was usual in public libraries serving cities in the population class of Kalamazoo. The staff, he continued, gave efficient and interested service and he also commended the superior training given by the apprentice class. He also noted that the service given by all members of the staff who came

in direct contact with the patrons of the Library was highly efficient; the present librarian had a vast amount of enthusiasm and ability and had often demonstrated a flair for promotion and publicity. The book resources of the Library, he added, were greater than in most libraries serving cities comparable in size to Kalamazoo.

That part of his report, however, which dealt with the physical plant painted an entirely different picture. The central library building, he said, was "totally inadequate" and a "serious fire hazard," and plans for a new building should be initiated at once. The same was true of the Art House, but the Washington Square building, on the other hand, presented a pleasing contrast to the main library building. Spaulding had no quarrel with the location of the Library and Museum, which he described as excellent.⁴⁸

Three months later, C. E. Stedman, a representative of Walker and Weeks, an architectural firm in Cleveland, spent two days at the Library, studying the situation, its needs and potentials, and presented the Board with a preliminary report outlining the main requirements of a main library and museum building and also a drawing of two floors of a possible structure.⁴⁹

Perhaps these recommendations and plans would have received serious study or consideration and possible implementation if it had not been for the outbreak of World War II in the fall of 1939. The fact, though, that nothing appears in the Board minutes about either the Spaulding or Stedman report may indicate a lack of interest on the part of the Board members of the time, or a conviction that it was inopportune to act upon them.

But the Library needed more room and in order to meet this demand, a small apartment in the Prange building, directly opposite ~~the library~~ was rented.⁵⁰

In spite of its spatial needs, the Library continued to grow; over nine thousand volumes were added to its book collection in 1938/39. Even though 4,700 books ~~had~~ had been discarded, ~~its~~ ^{now} holdings totaled 128,000 volumes, ~~and~~ book circulation exceeded 675,000, which did not begin to tell the whole story,* for nearly 42,500 Museum exhibits and 460,000 audio-visual items were loaned. In the film collection there now were twenty-one titles--two years later there were fifty-four, with a circulation of 576. A year later 711,148 books, periodicals and pamphlets were loaned, only 5,200 below the record year of 1933. The Washington Square Branch had a collection of 9,367 volumes and a circulation of 62,000; East Branch's holdings comprised nearly 9,000, with a circulation of slightly less than 36,000 volumes. On January 4, 1938, a Gaylord charging machine was installed; this step was preceded by a complete registration of all adult borrowers.⁵¹

The cost of operating the Library was also increasing. In 1938/39 the total budget had reached \$89,000, with State aid amounting to slightly more than \$3,000, and after all expenses had been paid, the Library still had a balance of nearly \$10,000. Two years later the budget was somewhat less than \$86,000. In connection with this budget, Miss Roberts remarked that the only time that the Library was in the red was in 1933, when many taxes were unpaid and the school district had to close its books with a debit balance. The staff ~~now~~ consisted of thirty full-time and twenty-five part-time employees and 16.8 NYA and WPA workers, who had worked over 33,000 hours. In March of 1942, all of these government-paid assistants were lost.⁵²

One of the projects during this period was the making of a Library movie. This film showed the services performed in the

Library and also the increasingly impossible conditions, due to the lack of room, under which these services were performed. This film, which is still in existence, ~~and~~ is an interesting bit of library history; it cost \$500 and was shown seventeen times during the first year.⁵³

Another achievement of the period was the organization of the Friends of the Library under the sponsorship of the American Association of University Women; Sterling North spoke at the organization dinner. The Friends comprised 460 members and the Library, according to Miss Roberts, was very grateful for their services. The gift of one of its members made possible the construction of an outdoor display case, which was used until the Library was moved into temporary quarters in January 1958. This organization might have accomplished much if World War II had not diverted the attention and energies of its members to other areas.⁵⁴

The display case mentioned above proved to be an attraction to the public; many people made a special point of walking by the Library in order to avoid missing any of the displays. Businessmen were generous in loaning materials needed for exhibits and Museum ^{assistants} WPA did the work.⁵⁵

Another service that was initiated was the monthly publication, "Coming Events," an attempt to collate a record of the dates of planned events during the coming month in Kalamazoo. This service was used and appreciated by Library patrons until its discontinuance in recent years.⁵⁶

X

The entrance of the United States into World War II on December 8, 1941, greatly enlarged the work and responsibilities of the Library. The defense industries of the area made heavy demands on it for books on factory management, welding, blueprint reading and

foundry work. Then there were many individuals who were baffled by the new Government regulations, and laboring people asked for aid in filling out the many forms that were now required. To meet these requests considerable use was made of the inter-library loan service.

The Library staff worked hard to meet the request of Washington that every public library become a "War Information Center" and it met with reasonable success; lack of space was the chief obstacle to greater achievement. Staff members also personally visited all civilian defense community chairmen, explaining the resources of the Library to them and asking for their cooperation. The result was that not a day passed without calls for information. and the Reference Department especially was under heavy pressure.

The Victory Book campaign was the Library's great effort, and it was aided in this project by the college librarians. The responsibility for this campaign was assumed by the newly formed staff organization and over nine thousand books were collected. Since about half of these books were of doubtful value, they were sold as old paper for \$30.

Miss Roberts was concerned that not enough was being done for the soldiers. Among other things, she felt that the Museum, which by now was a popular member of the Library System, should be open on Sundays to accommodate the soldiers and others who could not come on weekdays. Apparently nothing ever came of her desire.⁵⁷

What were people reading during these troubled years? According to the annual report for 1941/42, Berlin Diary by William L. Shirer was the most popular, having over one hundred reserves in the summer of 1942. Other non-fiction books that had many reserves were Mission to Moscow by Joseph E. Davies; Out of the Night by

Jean Valtin; Mein Kampf by Adolf Hitler and the Soong Sisters by Emily Hahn. The fiction titles with the most reserves were Moon is Down by John Steinbeck, Windswept by Mary Ellen Chase, Dragon Seed by Pearl Buck, Sun is My Undoing by Marguerite Steen and King's Row by Henry Bellamann.⁵⁸

In spite of their many concerns and problems, some of the members of the staff, like Jeanne Griffin, found time for outside activities. She was vice-president of the Michigan Library Association during 1940/41; she had been offered the presidency, but had refused because the office would have placed such heavy demands on her time. She did, however, accept the chairmanship of the Legislative Committee. At the close of the legislative session, this committee had to its credit the removal of the political appointee State Librarian, the naming of a strong State Board for Libraries and a State Aid to Libraries Fund of \$250,000 for each year of the biennial period.⁵⁹

A staff association for the Library was organized in late 1941 or early 1942 with Miss Roberts' encouragement and approval. The purpose of this organization was the maintenance and promotion of high standards of service, the welfare of the staff and the fostering of a professional viewpoint by encouraging the expression of constructive ideas and professional research. Its first officers were Katherine Harris, president, Jeanetta Sagers, vice-president, Sophia Polovina, secretary, and Alice Waite, treasurer.⁶⁰

This organization still functions; it is responsible for the staff paper "O70", maintenance of the staff room, and it attempts to resolve problems that irk or disquiet its members. It has served as a sounding board for the complaints and dissatisfactions of the staff, but it is doubtful that it has been the positive influence in the Library that its founders had hoped it would be.

XI

For the Library the big news of 1941 was the resignation of Flora B. Roberts on December 15 or 16, effective July 1, 1942. Miss Roberts had directed the Kalamazoo Public Library for twenty-four years. When she came in 1918, it was a collection of books; when she relinquished her position, it was one of the outstanding libraries in the State, being surpassed only by the Detroit Public Library. A glance through her monthly and annual reports indicates that she was a woman of positive convictions and that she had a mind that was continually wrestling with ideas that would make the Library more efficient and a greater force in the community. To her a library was a dynamic institution whose influence should extend farther and farther into its community.⁶¹

Miss Roberts had a quick mind and exceptional executive ability. Possibly her greatest weakness was a difficulty in getting along with some of the members of her staff, a weakness which she was quick to acknowledge. According to Jeanne Griffin, who was her assistant for twenty-four years, Miss Roberts recognized that she had a crust and that she might have problems in her staff relations. When she asked Miss Griffin to join the staff as her assistant, she told her that she wanted someone who could supplement her in staff and public relations. It should be noted, however, that women like Lillian Anderson, Bessie Jane Reed and Eleanor Ricker, who had worked with Miss Roberts for many years would not have agreed with this evaluation of her personality. One of them, when Miss Griffin's statement was repeated to her, exclaimed, "Did Jeanne say that?"⁶²

During her years as director of the Public Library, she brought together and organized a highly trained and efficient staff of professional librarians. Because of her vision and

executive ability, the Library developed not only into one of the outstanding libraries in the State, but was also given recognition in national library circles as well.⁶³

The Library was the center of Flora B. Roberts' existence, even though she loved to travel and enjoyed close friendships. But after her retirement, she found herself unable to leave the administration of the Library to her successors, an inability that was aggravated by an increasing poor health. As her immediate successor, Geanne Griffin, put it, Miss Roberts stayed too long on the job--she was seventy-two when she retired--and upon her retirement was unable to find self-realization and happiness in her artistic home, her lovely garden, her travels at home and abroad and her friendship with Ellis Walker.⁶⁴

Her relations with the Board of Education were generally good and constructive. Her feelings toward this body were well stated in a paragraph from her letter of resignation:

My associations with this Board through the years of my administration of the Library have been most gratifying in all ways. There have been times when I have regretted that the problems of the public school system loomed so large that they prevented the members of the Board from having a more intimate understanding of the problems of the Library. However, through the years I have never found this Board unready to back the recommendations which I have brought to it, nor unwilling to allot to the Library as generous a budget as the funds available have permitted. The Kalamazoo Public Library has always had its share of the school tax monies, and this is often not true of libraries subject to Boards of Education.

In her expressions of appreciation, she did not forget to mention Mr. Anderson and his co-workers in the business administration of the school district, Mr. Norrix and his predecessors, the staff of the Library, the people of the community and the Gazette, the one newspaper, that "has never failed to aid our attempts to reach the people."⁶⁵

Two years before her retirement Miss Roberts said that she had often been asked:

'Would it be better if the Library were under the City Commission?' and I reply, I think it would not have developed so rapidly and so far through these last twenty years had it been a municipal library. The Board of Education has always been fair to the Library; we have always had our share of whatever the School District had.⁶⁶

Her final report enumerated the accomplishments of the past twenty-four years. In 1918, she noted, the library system had consisted of the Central Library, three branches--Portage, East and Westnedge--and four school stations--Woodward, Burdick, Frank and Lake; in 1942 there were five branches--Washington Square, East, Lincoln, Central High School and West Main--and six school stations--Harding, Hillcrest, Parkwood, McKinley, Westnedge and Woodward. And, besides the main library building, there were now two other buildings--the Library House and the Art House, which housed the Museum, the Art Department of the Library and the Institute of Arts.

During this twenty-four year period, she continued, the population of the city had increased twenty per cent, the book collection of the Library 59.5 per cent, or from 50,000 volumes to nearly 137,000, and the number of book loans, 313 per cent. In 1918 twenty per cent of the population of the school district were regular borrowers; by 1942 this rate had doubled. The Library budget had more than tripled, from \$29,116.59 to \$90,255; and the staff had grown from a small one to thirty-two full-time and twenty-five part-time workers.⁶⁷

In at least one aspect, the record of her administration must have been a keen disappointment to Miss Roberts, for the gifts to the Library totaled only slightly over \$4,500, not a large amount when one considers how earnestly she had promoted gifts to and endowments

for it.

The leaders of the community united in expressing their appreciation to Miss Roberts for her years of inspired and capable service. During the spring of 1942 she received a number of honors. One that must have given her considerable satisfaction was the degree of Master of Arts honoris causa, awarded her by Kalamazoo College, making her the third woman to receive an honorary degree from that institution.

On April 29 an informal community was given in her honor by the Friends of the Library. The Board approved the closing of the Library and its branches at 6:00, so that all of their employees could attend. The Kalamazoo Gazette's report of this dinner summed up the city's regard for its retiring librarian:

Kalamazoo's feeling for its library--a civic relationship uncommonly strong and uncommonly recorded--was distilled and savored.... at a dinner last night.

Chapter 12

AN INTERLUDE, 1942-1955

An important era in the history of the Kalamazoo Public Library had ended, and a new director was ready to take over its administration.

I

On March 16, 1942, the Board of Education had offered the post of head librarian to Jeanne Griffin, who had come to Kalamazoo in February 1918 and until the spring of 1942 had served as assistant librarian and head of the Reference Department. She assumed her new duties on July 1.¹

Miss Griffin was a graduate of the School of Library Science of Drexel Institute, Philadelphia, and had begun her library career at Jackson, Michigan. Then she served as librarian in Duluth and St. Paul, Minnesota, and at North Dakota Agricultural College in Fargo. She had also attended the University of Michigan, the University of California, Western Michigan College and Western Reserve University, receiving her bachelor's degree from that institution.²

Jeanetta Sagers succeeded her as head of the Reference Department.

Early in Miss Griffin's administration, two key members of the staff retired. The resignation of Lucy K. Wheeler as

head of the Circulation Department was announced on March 20, 1944. Miss Wheeler was the last of the old stalwarts, having served the Library for nearly forty-five years. In announcing her resignation, Miss Griffin noted, "Never have her interest and enthusiasm waned during these years." On June 4 Miss Wheeler was honored at a reception at the Main Library. Her successor was Miss Lillian Anderson.³

Then on August 6, 1945, ~~Mrs.~~ Mary E. Palmer resigned as director of the Museum. ~~Mrs. Palmer had been~~ ~~had been~~ director of the Kalamazoo Public Museum since 1927 and had been largely responsible for its establishment and had also set the pattern for its future development. Her successor, Alexis A. Praus, was appointed on February 18, 1946.⁴

In the fall of 1944, the Library took a step that a quarter of a century later seems to have been long overdue. On November 1, Mrs. Zera Barnes Le Compte, a young colored woman, was appointed an assistant in the Circulation Department of the Music Library. Miss Griffin commented that her efficiency had brought favorable comments. Mrs. Alma Powell, another colored woman, was a member of the 1944 summer training class and after her appointment to the Library staff remained a respected and appreciated worker until her death in 1967.⁵

III

The demand for library service, especially in the schools, was becoming a serious problem. ~~to the Library~~. Miss Griffin observed that every school was clamoring for more hours of library service, but that the Library was unable to furnish more books, more personnel and longer opening hours, because of an inadequate budget. During 1942/43 the income from tax sources ^{had fallen} fell over a

thousand dollars short of the required amount to qualify for State aid the following year. Not until three years later was the Library able to qualify.⁶

Soon after the end of World War II, young people began to use the Library in large numbers. Their presence was upsetting to the librarians who had long been accustomed to the cloistered quietness of the traditional library. Miss Griffin complained that "Vivacious high school youths who in evening hours upset the public library quiet and decorum are proving to be a problem." She also informed the Board that the youth so monopolized the space and made so much noise that it was difficult for an adult to find "a place to sit or to hear himself think." Indeed, two librarians had to be on duty evenings, one of them devoting her entire time to subduing the youth and keeping them ~~library~~ quiet.⁷

It is true that during the past twenty-five years student use of libraries has increased very markedly. Libraries all over the nation are uncertain about the best way of coping with this influx of student users. As one Kalamazoo librarian observed some years ago, "For many years we were pleading for them to use the library; now we don't know what to do with them."

During the following five years, student use of the Public Library continued to grow and this growth brought with it problems that perplexed the ~~library~~ staff. Some members ~~of the staff~~ very decidedly balked at doing research for the students and in February 1949, the Board approved the librarian's recommendation that students be encouraged to use their own school and college libraries and that librarians on duty at the Public Library should not be expected to do more than give directions ~~to students~~ for finding books, periodicals and other materials instead of obtaining them

for the students. The Board's action also stated that adults should not be kept waiting too long while staff members were assisting students. Those requesting telephone service were to be told politely that librarians could not aid in the preparation of assignments over the telephone and they were to be discouraged from visiting and talking in the reading rooms.⁸

III

About thirty per cent of the people of Kalamazoo were patrons of the Library, and the increase in the number of ~~library~~ users was reflected in the circulation totals. During 1945/46 over 576,000 books were loaned, besides some 200,000 other units, such as periodicals, pictures, slides, films, and maps, making a grand total of 782,889½ units. The one-half unit was not explained in the librarian's annual report. The circulation in the school libraries exceeded 76,000 and that of the classroom collections, 27,000. The holdings of the Library totaled nearly 143,000^{volumes}, with nearly 7,000 being added each year, but the net gain was only half of this number because between 3,000 and 4,000 books were discarded every year.

Library expenditures were now well over \$100,000. By 1947/48 the Library-Museum budget was in excess of \$171,000. Salaries accounted for more than \$103,000, or sixty per cent of the budget, books and supplies, \$19,400, and the Museum, \$13,600.⁹

The mending and repairing of books had become an important activity by the mid forties. In 1942 Mrs. Flora M. Champion was hired to supervise the mending department. Over 8,000 books were mended in 1945/46. Since then this department has mended thousands more. Although most of the repairs were of a minor nature, many of these books would have had to be replaced after one or two additional circulations if they had not been given this attention.

Book mutilation was ~~getting to be~~ a serious problem, due in part perhaps to the great student use of the Library. And it remains a difficult ^{situation} ~~situation~~ to control in many libraries, even though copying machines have been installed in the hope that this might lessen the damage being done to the books.¹⁰

Space in the library buildings was a problem that was becoming more critical every year. The Kalamazoo Institute of Arts was asked to vacate the Art House by June 1, 1946, because there was no room in the Central Library Building for the classroom library collections. All Museum activities were then transferred to the Center Building--the Peck House, where they remained until shortly before the beginning of the construction of the new library-museum building. At the same time the Art Department of the Library was moved to the first floor of the Corner House--the Kauffer House.¹¹

Because they were aware that the spatial problems of the Library were serious, there were people in Kalamazoo who continued to think of a new library. The bad condition of all three of the library buildings further pointed up the need for a new structure. In 1945/46 it was reported that all of the buildings had bad leaks and on July 1, 1947, the Board approved a new roof for the Center Building at a cost of \$4,250.

Harold Allen suggested that a new library building would be a fitting war memorial. His proposal was presented to the Board at its December 10, 1947 meeting and also to the local Living Memorial Committee, but apparently no action was ever taken on it.¹²

IV

In spite of the lack of room, constructive steps continued to be made by the administration and staff of the Library to broaden and strengthen its services. In the spring of 1947, a Great Books

Discussion Group was formed in Kalamazoo. The meetings of the group were held in the Academy of Medicine rooms and the average attendance was fifteen, with two to six visitors. This discussion group is still sponsored by the Library, and although the attendance has never been large, these meetings have attracted some of the intellectually curious--those interested in the great and significant literature of our culture and civilization.¹³

Another development was the appointment, early in 1948, of a professional librarian, specializing in the field of adult education, an area of library service that was becoming increasingly important. A year later this librarian, who was also known as the Community Group Counselor, was placed in charge of the audio-visual department of the Library, popularly called the Film Center.¹⁴

The microfilming of the Kalamazoo Gazette was ~~also~~ initiated and a microfilm reader was purchased. Perhaps it should also be mentioned that in 1945 the Library was able to purchase a delivery truck, a convenience that had long been needed.

As far as the staff of the Library was concerned, the most noteworthy accomplishment of the period was the approval by the Board on May 19, 1947, of "liberal salary schedules for librarians and other full-time employees and a much improved part-time wage scale." Salary-wise the staff had been the stepchildren of the school system for many years. Under the new schedules salaries compared favorably with the teachers' new salary schedule and with salaries that then prevailed in the library profession. This was the first classified salary schedule for Kalamazoo Library-Museum employees, who numbered nearly ninety.¹⁵

The highlight of 1947 and possibly of the decade for the Library was the observation on October 12 of the 75th anniversary ~~of the Public Library~~ as a public library. The anniversary was marked by a series of celebrations, climaxing with a banquet at the First Congregational Church, at which Robert J. Blakely of the editorial staff of the Des Moines Register and Tribune was the featured speaker. At the banquet tribute was paid to the four women who had served as librarians of the Kalamazoo Public Library since 1972. The banquet was held on Thursday, October 16, and was arranged by the Friends of the Library. A local bakery donated a beautiful three-tiered birthday cake, the first slice being cut by Flora B. Roberts.

The Library's 75th anniversary was also publicized by local department stores, radio station WKZO and other agencies, and a fine oil painting of the Van Deusen Library, recently painted by a well-known local artist, was presented to D. Gordon Knapp, president of the Board of Education.¹⁶

The anniversary year recorded an active year in all departments of the Library. Almost 517,000 books were loaned, besides thousands of other items; over 12,000 questions were answered by the Reference Department; and 20,000 of the citizens of Kalamazoo were registered as users of the Library.¹⁷

Of the thousands of books that were read, the most popular fiction was Kathleen Winsor's Forever Amber, Miracle of the Bulls, by Janney Russell, and Caldwell Taylor's This Side of Innocence. The non-fiction books that seemed to have the most readers were On Being a Real Person, by Harry Emerson Fosdick, Release from Nervous Tension, by David Harold Fink, and Joshua Loth's Peace of Mind,

titles that may be indicative of the frustrations and tensions of the day.

VI.

Just a few months after the festivities of the Library's 75th anniversary, the friends and patrons of the Library, the members of the staff and the Board of Education were saddened by the resignation of Jeanne Griffin, which was read to the Board on January 5, 1948, and was to become effective on April 30.¹⁷

Charles (Cretsy) Cretsinger, who had served the Library as its custodian since, also retired at this time. For over twenty-five years Mr. Cretsinger had given ~~the Library~~ devoted and faithful service. No detail was too small for him to notice. Those who worked with him still speak with great appreciation of his conscientious and efficient service. When his retirement was announced, the Board instructed its secretary, H. W. Anderson, to write a letter of appreciation to Cretsinger.¹⁸

When Miss Griffin was asked the reason for her early retirement, she simply stated that she did not want to make the same mistake that Miss Roberts had made, who had stayed on the job too long. Another factor, may have been the inability of Miss Roberts to retire from the administration of the Library. One or two of the members of the staff at the time have said that she would ~~come to the Library and try~~ to advise both Miss Griffin and Mr. Chait on the administration of the Library.

It is difficult to evaluate Jeanne Griffin's administration fairly. She assumed her duties at a time when a terrible war was engrossing the attention of most Americans. Institutions, such as public libraries, were marking time, providing a great deal of help and service, yet unable to show any phenomenal progress. And

when the war ended in 1945, the concern of the people of Kalamazoo was drawn more to the needs of the schools than to those of the Library. The fact that she succeeded a librarian who had unusual administrative abilities and who had dominated the Kalamazoo Public Library for nearly twenty-five years should also be taken into consideration when Miss Griffin's administration is appraised.

Flora B. Roberts, although generally respected and admired, apparently never won the warm affection of the staff that Jeanne Griffin did. She was the kind of person ~~who~~ was always addressed as Miss Roberts, even by Jeanne Griffin who had been her friend since Drexel Institute days. Miss Griffin had a warm, friendly personality that caused her friendship to be cherished by the older members of the ~~Library~~ staff until her death.

An indication of the high regard that the community held for her was the number of people that attended the receptions held in her honor. On March 7 the library staffs of Western Michigan College and Kalamazoo College honored her at a coffee in Mandelle Library. Miss Roberts was a special guest at this coffee. A week later the Friends of the Library sponsored an informal reception for her in the lounge of the Civic Auditorium. Five hundred people attended this affair.¹⁹

Miss Griffin then retired to Niles, Michigan, where her family had lived for several generations, taking her mother with her. Here she lived until her death in January 1969, in the enjoyment of her home, her friends, and extensive travels. Until a few years prior to her death, she would occasionally visit her friends in Kalamazoo, who always enjoyed seeing her.

VIII

Early in March, the Board began to interview candidates for

appointment as head librarian. William Chait was offered the position on March 15 at a salary of \$4800 a year. Chait assumed his duties on May 1, but he was in Kalamazoo during the latter part of April, conferring with Miss Griffin and getting acquainted with the staff and library affairs in general.²⁰

The new librarian was a native of Brooklyn, New York, and had begun his library career with the Brooklyn Public Library in 1934, where he remained until 1945. For a year or so he was chief of the libraries of the Second Service Command of the United States Army, having supervision of all Army libraries in New York, New Jersey and Delaware. Previous to his appointment to the Kalamazoo Public Library, Chait had been chief of inservice training and personnel control at the Milwaukee Public Library.

It soon became evident that Chait was a man of ideas and action. One of his first innovations was the formation of a book selection committee, composed of seven staff members, mostly department heads, each member being responsible for the selection of books in his subject field. Although this committee has grown in numbers, it continues to select the books for the Library. The book-buying policy of the Library was also changed during the summer. Formerly books had been purchased from a local dealer who gave a 25 per cent discount, but now book orders were placed with jobbers who gave 33 1/3 to 35 per cent discounts. Before the end of the year, book orders were placed twice a month with book dealers, so that books would be available to ~~library~~ patrons on or near publication date.²¹

The budget for the year 1948/49 of nearly \$177,000, the largest in the history of the Library, included \$800 for a lending service of recordings. The circulation of phonograph recordings

was begun on November 1, 1948. The recordings were loaned from the Art Department, the rental fee being two cents per day, and a high fidelity record player with two sets of earphones was placed in the reading room. During the first month, 1,690 recordings were loaned; the total circulation for the period beginning November 1, 1948, and ending on June 30, 1949, was nearly 8,000 and this from a collection that consisted of 224 albums, 131 single records, and thirteen long-playing recordings. By 1953/54 the long-playing recordings had become so popular that they replaced the old 78's.²²

Less than six months after Chait's arrival, the pattern of Sunday service was also changed. For many years the Library had been open on Sunday afternoons for those who wished to come and read, but books were not checked out, nor was reference service given. On September 12 books were loaned for the first time on Sunday and the circulation for that day was eleven books. By October 24, however, the circulation had increased to 62. This service brought a favorable response from the public.²³

The Board authorized Chait to permit the staff members who wished to take the time off instead of receiving extra compensation for Sunday work to do so. He was further authorized to initiate not only circulation of books, but also full reference service on Sundays if enough part-time assistants could be found who were able and willing to work on Sundays at the regular rate of pay if "sufficient funds were available within the framework of the present budget."²³

But for the succeeding twenty years, Sunday library service remained limited. Only one professional librarian and two student assistants provided the service and this kind of staff was entirely inadequate on those Sunday afternoons when the Library was crowded,

which was a frequent occurrence. ~~Then too the Library staff was divided on the quality of Sunday service. Some felt that the Library should not be open at all, but if it were open, the service should be extremely limited; others believed that if ~~it~~ Library were open on Sundays, then full service should be provided. At one time an attempt was made to close the Library on Sundays, but the Board refused to approve this policy.~~

On the recommendation of the staff, a travel film program was presented during the fall and winter of 1948/49. This program was similar to the one that had been given in 1945/46. These film programs have been very popular, so much so that in recent years several showings of the same films have been necessary.²⁴

For twenty years the Public Library had provided film service for the public schools in the School District. Early in 1949 this service ended. On Friday, January 21, Miss Mamie Austin, who had been the ~~Library's~~ film technician for thirteen years, presented her last movie program in the Kalamazoo schools. The audio-visual program that Miss Austin had pioneered, was taken over by the Audio-Visual Department of the school system. She, however, continued on as Library film technician, but her attention was now directed to the increasing use of films by adult groups in the city.²⁵

This year was also the last one in the life of the Art Department, which had been in existence for thirty-one years. Its books were incorporated into the collection of the Main Library.²⁶

The training class, established in 1921 for the training of sub-professional assistants, was discontinued in 1948, because the applicants were few in number and most of those who had applied were not suited for library work. Probably another reason for its discontinuance was the recognition by the Public Library of the

training given by Western Michigan College for those who had a bachelor's degree at their entrance to the College as the equivalent to a fifth year of library training.*

In looking around for more things to modernize, Chait discovered the rule that forbade library personnel to smoke in the Library. He brought this rule to the attention of the Board, which decided that it would be permissible for him to rescind it.²⁸

During his first week as director ~~of the Library~~, Chait concluded that library salaries were too low. At the first meeting of the Board that he attended, he advised that body that the present base salary of \$2,300 was too low for professional librarians ~~was inadequate~~ and should be raised to at least \$2,600 for librarians with a master's degree. The salary schedule that had been adopted in 1947 provided for a salary of \$2,000 for an employee with one year of library school, \$2,200 for three years college and one year of library training, and \$2,400 for an employee with a MLS degree. The salary schedule for teachers was \$2,400-\$4,000 for those with a bachelor's degree and \$2,600-\$4,200 for those who had a master's degree. The salary for the chief librarian was set at \$4,500-\$5,500. On June 1 Chait presented a schedule of proposed salary increases for librarians, which the Board adopted. This schedule placed librarians on an equality with teachers having a similar education.²⁹

* The School of Librarianship was founded in 1945 by Miss Alice Louise Le Fevre with the aid of a grant from the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. It was originally established to provide library preparation for those individuals who had charge of school and public libraries, especially in rural areas. During its first year the faculty of the school consisted of one member--the director, but for the 1946 summer session a second person was appointed on a permanent basis. The enrollment for the spring of 1946 was ten, but by the academic year of 1949/50 it had increased to 101. In April 1948, the school was accredited by the American Library Association as a Type III undergraduate school. Graduate courses were first offered in 1953; by 1957 the library science curriculum had been revised and expanded into a 5-year program with only the minor retained at the undergraduate level; and in 1959 the school was accredited as a graduate department of library science by the American Library Association.

There seem to have been questions in the minds of some of the members of the staff and most certainly in the mind of the director that the quality of the services offered by the Library was not all that it should be. Consequently, a Kalamazoo Public Library self-evaluation committee, a "What's Right With Us, What's Wrong With Us Committee" was formed in June, with Mrs. Mildred Hedrick its chairman. But there seems to be no record of the group's conclusions; indeed, there is no indication that it ever functioned.

At the same time a staff committee was appointed, of which Lillian Anderson was the chairman, to review the rules of service that pertained to the Library's patrons and to draw up a unified code of rules for all of its agencies.³⁰

During this same period a manual of staff regulations was developed by Chait and a committee of the staff association. These regulations incorporated a localized version of the Fair Employment Practices Act, which had been approved by the Board in January 1949. This manual listed 221 rules and guidelines, which were based upon practices that had followed for many years, and it was unanimously approved by the staff and adopted by the Board in August 1952.

The Board also adopted a new Library Bill of Rights--a statement of rights that it was hoped would serve to guard the Library against censorship pressures by individuals and groups who felt that they were wise enough to prescribe what should be ~~read~~ and what shouldn't ^{be read} by the patrons of the Library. The Board took this action during Chait's first year at the Kalamazoo Library. Chait had informed the Board that "the Kalamazoo public library has not been subjected to any attempt at censorship although individuals occasionally attempt to tell us that certain books should be removed."

He believed, however, that "The adoption of the library bill of rights

is not a defensive feature, but a positive statement of our belief in a free, democratic public library. Its adoption would serve to strengthen the hand of libraries in various other sections of the country where censorship practices are being exerted."³¹

Four years later the Board took a stand against the suppression of books by those who "assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens." Chait again reported that few attempts had been made to suppress books on the local library shelves. Most of the attempts, he said, were anonymous telephone calls, but that the callers desisted when they were asked to identify themselves. In May 1953 the Board adopted the "Freedom to Read" statement prepared by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council.³²

VIII

In the spring of 1949 the Library had forty centers of service. They were the Main Library, Art Department, Museum, the East and Washington Square branches, Central High School, Borgess, Bronson and Fairmount Hospitals, the State Hospital, Merrill Home, the Kalamazoo County Detention Home, six fire stations, ten public schools and a number of parochial schools served by classroom collections, which numbered 83.³³

The total book circulation for the year 1948/49 was nearly 612,000. The Kalamazoo Library patron at this time read 61 per cent more non-fiction than fiction and the reserve lists indicated that he was primarily interested in his home, his children and his world.³⁴

By the end of 1951, American children were reading more books than ever, in spite of television and comic books. According to Louise Singley, director of work with children, juvenile readers accounted for more than 50 per cent of the total circulation of the Public Library. The circulation of juvenile books was more than

373,000, or 10 per cent higher than the previous year. It seems, however, that by 1951 television had begun to affect the reading of those who patronized the branch libraries; Washington Square's circulation dropped 20 per cent that year.

Yet it is difficult to say just what effect television had on the reading habits of Kalamazoo; two years later, for example, we find that the total library circulation of books had risen to over 633,000, the highest since 1941/42, compared with 628,000 in 1950/51, the year television came to Kalamazoo. Adult circulation was up 6.1 and juvenile, ^{4.8}~~10~~ per cent. The circulation of non-fiction books, especially, continued to increase. It was thought that full employment, television and the lack of good fiction ~~was~~^{were} responsible for the decline in fiction reading. This decline was generally reported by libraries and bookstores throughout the country. One result of this decrease in fiction reading was the discontinuance of the rental book collection, which had for several years shown a steady decline.³⁵

In March 1949 the non-resident fee for a library card was raised from one dollar to three dollars, because, as had always been true, many non-residents availed themselves of the services provided by the Public Library. As a consequence of this increase, the number of fee registrants dropped from 162 to 62.³⁶

The hospital library service had now been in operation for twenty years. Eleanor Ricker had conceived and originated this service, which had been responsible for loaning 900,000 books to patients, beginning with 1,286 during the first year and increasing to more than 90,000 in 1948/49. Hospital library service attempted to provide therapy as well as reading material and personalities were analyzed in order to fit the material to the patient. It is difficult, how-

however, to conceive how an adequate analysis could be made in a two to three minute interview. Patients who could not hold a book had it projected on the ceiling. Many of the magazines used in this service were the gifts of Kalamazoo individuals and organizations.³⁷

In directing the affairs of the Library, Chait was continually looking for ways to improve the services that were being provided ~~for~~ for its patrons. In the spring of 1950 an auto-page-drive-up book return was installed. This device permitted borrowers to drive up and return books without the inconvenience of looking for a parking place. The cost of the book return was \$265. The first installation of a similar return was in Oklahoma City and it is likely that Kalamazoo was the second city in the nation to provide such a convenience.³⁸

Then in June 1952, the Library and its branches began the practice of a long-term loan of books during vacation months. Under this arrangement any adult or child card holder was permitted to borrow up to ten books and keep them until October. This policy, however, did not include new books or books in special demand.³⁹

Chait was also aware of the advantages of centralized book processing in the library system. In 1948/49 the processing of all new books was centralized, which meant that the new books being sent to the branches and schools were ready for use.⁴⁰

For twenty years the Public Library had furnished book service to the city firemen and for years this service was popular and appreciated. In 1951, however, it was discontinued, because the books were ~~being~~ no longer read. Possibly the firemen were beginning to watch television and therefore did not have the time to read.⁴¹

Not only services but also buildings were becoming obsolescent.

In 1952 the Kauffer House, which had been used as the Library Annex for twenty-five years, was razed. It was an old landmark, having been built by Henry Gilbert in 1870. Gilbert had sold the house to Daniel den Bleyker and then to Heber Reed, a well-known industrialist of spring harrow fame. Reed's hobby was fast horses and it was he who had built the stables at the rear of the house. These stables were used for a number of years as a storage center for the Museum. Hale P. Kauffer, who was one of the founders of the Bryant Paper Company and the Kalamazoo Sled Company and was instrumental in organizing the Kalamazoo Corset Company, bought the house in 1900. In 1927 the property was acquired by the Board of Education, and after the removal of the house and stables, the land was leased for a three-year period to a parking lot operator.⁴²

During the decade of the fifties, a number of long-time librarians retired. The first one to retire was Miss Ethel Young, who had come to the Library in 1921 and had been in charge of the East Branch since February 1925. She retired in August 1951 and was succeeded by Eleanor Ricker. Miss Bessie Jane Reed, who had been the librarian at Central High School since 1925 and who had conducted the apprentice class for many years, resigned in February 1952.⁴³ Bessie Jane Reed was a competent librarian, highly respected and appreciated by her colleagues. As Lillian Anderson, who has known her for nearly fifty years expressed it:

Miss Reed is a librarian's librarian, dedicated and professional to her finger tips. A person the library profession is proud to have in its ranks and a person the rest of us admire and emulate.⁴⁴

Two years later, Louise Singley, who had been Director of Work with Children for twenty-eight years, retired. To generations of Kalamazoo children Miss Singley had been "the story book lady." She was largely responsible for establishing a modern children's

department in the Kalamazoo Public Library. She was succeeded by Alice K. Stevens, supervisor of children's work at the Muncie, Indiana Public Library since 1949.⁴⁵

Fannie Kerr Hall, who had joined the library staff in 1910 to direct the work with children ~~and who was the Library's first professional librarian~~, retired at the end of 1954, after sixteen years of outstanding service as children's librarian at the Washington Square branch.⁴⁶

In the summer of 1957, Lois Ingling and Helen Fraser retired. Miss Ingling had joined the staff in 1915 and had served the Library in many capacities. When she retired she had been the order librarian for a number of years. Mrs. Fraser had been the cataloger of the Library since 1926, having joined the ~~library~~ staff in the early 1920's. She was an outstanding cataloger and through the years had been a devoted and hard-working librarian. Miss Ingling was succeeded by Olive O. Duffy of Chicago, Illinois, and Mrs. Fraser by Walter H. Siemsen of Vermillion, South Dakota.

IX

For nearly forty years the librarians of the Kalamazoo Public Library had been complaining that the Van Deusen building was inadequate for good library service, and for at least ten years before her retirement, Flora B. Roberts had tried to interest the people of Kalamazoo in a new library, but her efforts were frustrated by the Depression and then by the second World War.

In the spring of 1948, the priority that should be given to a new library was discussed by a number of city organizations. ~~It~~ ~~It~~ was placed ninth by the members of the Chamber of Commerce, Junior Chamber of Commerce and potential members of the two organizations, men's groups, union members and students. Teachers,

however, gave it fifth place and women's groups, first place. Many of the groups that had given ninth place to a new library gave first place to new school buildings.⁴⁷

On November 28, 1949, the tax payers of the school district defeated a school bond issue of \$6,000,000 for the expansion and modernization of the public school system and the construction of a new public library, whose cost had been estimated at \$740,000.

After the decisive defeat of the proposed \$6,000,000 bond issue, the Kalamazoo Citizens Committee on Public Schools, a cross-section citizens' group, was formed to make an independent and factual study of the needs of the ~~public~~ school system. The committee reported that Kalamazoo could have the schools its children needed for the next five years on a pay-as-you-go basis by continuing the special five-mill levy for new buildings and salary considerations. The committee continued in existence for at least four years. The Executive Committee of the organization voted in May 1950 to give top priority to studies determining classroom needs and decided that teachers' salaries and library needs would have to wait until school requirements had been determined. As the chairman of the committee put it, "Our Number One problem is more buildings for the kids."⁴⁸

Another school election was held on March 5, 1951. Up for decision at this election was the pay-as-you-go school building expansion proposal, which was approved by a 6,874 to 1,490 vote. The voting was so heavy that the six polling places proved to be inadequate.⁴⁹

While plans were being made for more school construction, thought was also being given to better school libraries and their administration. In 1949/50 an arrangement was worked out between Dr. Loy Norrix, superintendent of schools, and William Chait, director of libraries, whereby the need for a school library would be

determined by Norrix, but its operation would be the responsibility of the director of the Public Library. The following year a library was established at South Junior High School and a year later one at Northeastern Junior High School. Both school libraries were considered to be successful operations, Northeastern Junior High circulating nearly 4,000 volumes during its first year.

The problem of providing library service to the elementary schools was also a matter of concern to both the library administration and the Board of Education. On August 2, 1955, the Board adopted a policy that looked toward the establishment of a school library in every elementary school having an enrollment of five hundred or more when quarters and funds became available. Elementary school book stations were begun in the West Main, Hillcrest and Milwood schools. Chait predicted that within five years the school district might have more than twenty school libraries and book stations and recommended that thought should be given to the establishment of a school library department, with a supervisor to coordinate all school library activities.⁵⁰

X:

Although Chait was well aware that the schools must be given priority, he refused to let the idea of a new library die. In July of 1948, he had proposed a city library tower, a ten-story building, which would house the Library on the second and third floors, and the rentals from store and office space to pay for the entire structure. A committee, consisting of William Chait, Loy Norrix, and Harley A. Anderson, was appointed to investigate Chait's proposal, which he had made because he realized there was less than a slight possibility of financing a new library with public funds

in the immediate years ahead.⁵¹

The condition of the Van Deusen Library was critical. In November 1949 Chait stated that it would cost \$100,000 to keep it in proper operating condition and then it would still be inadequate to meet library needs. For one thing, the heating system was causing a great deal of trouble; the first floor had to be heated to eighty degrees in order to get the second floor's temperature to seventy; the hot water pipes leaked under ground; and during the previous year three boiler sections had cracked and had to be replaced at a cost of \$2,000. The wiring system too was antiquated and a fire hazard. The roof of the Library building was in a bad condition and shingles blew off whenever there was a strong wind, and the floors in all three buildings were in bad shape.

Three days after Chait had made his report, one of the two boilers in the heating system cracked, flooding the basement and putting out the fire. It was still possible to heat the ^{building} ~~basement~~, if the temperature did not go below zero. To replace the cracked unit, it was estimated, would take a month.⁵²

Early in May 1950, a citizens' group sub-committee was named to study the needs of the Kalamazoo Public Library. Arthur Loring, chairman of the study committee of the Kalamazoo Citizens Committee on Public Schools, had called for this sub-committee. On June 28, Judge Carl C. Blankenburg accepted the chairmanship of the 24-member citizens' committee making an independent study of the Public Library. The study that followed centered in the following nine areas:

1. Whether there were provisions restricting the uses or disposal of any of the library buildings.
2. Physical condition of all library buildings.
3. School libraries and their services.
4. Comparison of the local library with those of other cities of comparable size.
5. A study of population growth to determine future library

needs.

6. Adequacy of present library facilities.

7. Library finance, including the percentage of school funds raised by local taxes which are expended for library purposes.

8. The question of whether present library buildings should be retained or replaced by a new structure, and whether any such proposal should be included in a new expansion program.

9. A survey of public opinion.⁵³

About two months later, a committee composed of James M. Wilson, Sr., an insurance executive, John H. Anderson, an engineer, and Peter Vanderlaan, an architect, reported that the Public Library building was a potential fire trap, with solid walls deceptively concealing an interior that was nothing more than "a used lumber yard." A flash fire, the report went on to say, "most certainly" would trap as many as 150 persons on the main floor of the building and children would be practically helpless if there were a fire in the Van Deusen room, which was in the basement. The second floor presented an even greater hazard.

Wilson, amazed and indignant at the situation, exclaimed, "You wouldn't permit this situation to exist in a factory or store in Kalamazoo!"

The committee further reported that the electric light fixtures were obsolete and dangerous and that the circuits were overloaded. The safety features of the Museum building were much better than those of the main building. The conclusion reached by Wilson was that there was but one possibility of making this building safe for the future and this would involve a complete rewiring, proper exits, fire escapes and the installation of sprinklers. He noted that it was difficult to estimate the cost of such a project, but if the building was to be maintained, immediate attention had to be given this matter. He concluded, "...it is utterly impossible to estimate the cost of revamping the building to

make it safe," and that there was "no stopping point. The building is absolutely obsolete." 54

The Library Sub-Committee, which made its report the last of August, recommended a new ^{building} library and that the Public Library continue under the jurisdiction of the Board of Education. The report also noted that the Library should not be neglected as it "is an integral part of community culture, and in Kalamazoo has long been essential to the functioning of the public schools." The committee commended the librarian and staff, who were making an "honest attempt to produce satisfactory work under trying conditions."

Another conclusion of the committee was that the Museum building, which was eventy years old, was completely unfit for an further occupancy, thus contradicting the judgment of the Committee of 3, and that conditions in the Annex and barn constituted a serious hazard. The Washington Square building was given a clean bill of health.

The Board then asked Fire Chief J. Frank Van Atta to make an inspection of the library buildings. It also prohibited any meetings of children on the second floor of the Library until the fire chief had made his report.

The report of the fire chief and building inspector was mild compared to that of the Citizens' Committee. They agreed with the committee that it probably would be too expensive to correct the hazards in the Annex, as the structure did not comply with present building codes. Their recommendations included the installation of an approved fire escape from the meeting room, the discontinuance of the use of the kitchen on the second floor until an approved ventilating system had been installed from the stove, the placing of panic hardware on all doors, the establishment of an approved means

of egress, the marking of all exits with directional signs leading to the exits, avoiding the excessive use of extension cords, the correction of obsolete wiring, and the removal of all unnecessary storage. The men also recommended that groups be permitted to use the second floor of the Library only at their own risk.⁵⁶

The Kalamazoo Citizens Committee on Public Schools in its report conceded that Kalamazoo should have a new and larger library, but that school needs would have to come first. The committee recommended that the work needed to make the library building usable be done at a cost of \$37,000, for it believed that present library facilities could be made serviceable for a few more years. Other recommendations of the committee included the use of Consumers Power steam heat, thus making the boiler room available for storage purposes, and the abandoning of the old frame Annex.⁵⁷

In March 1951, the Board retained Consumers Power and the contracting firm of M. C. L. Billingham on a fixed fee basis to begin the work of remodeling the Library and correcting its fire hazards.⁵⁸

Even though much could be done toward making the old library building safe, space was now at such a premium in the main stacks that books had to be discarded to make room for the new books that were being added to the collection. Chait noted, "We are getting close to the danger point in the main library and we must literally follow the practice of discarding an old book for each book we add." It was quite obvious that the Library had now reached the place where it was unable to grow in books or services unless a new building was provided.⁵⁹

Chapter 13

THE NEW LIBRARY-MUSEUM BUILDING, 1955-1962

I

Although he recognized that priority must be given to the Kalamazoo schools, William Chait clung tenaciously to the dream that Kalamazoo could and should also have a new library-museum building. A \$25,000 bequest from the estate of Mrs. Winifred D. Wallace in January 1954 gave him the opportunity to keep this dream alive. The bequest was officially accepted by the Board of Education on October 18, 1954, and a week or two later Chait proposed that it be used as the "nest egg" for a library building fund, which proposal was approved, ~~by the Board~~. Ten months earlier, however, the Kalamazoo Federation of Labor had sent a letter to the Board indicating its support of the Public Library and suggesting that the Wallace money be used to start a fund for a new building.

This bequest, according to Chait, was a major factor in stimulating interest in a new library-museum, but as early as May 17, 1954, the Board had already approved, though in principle only, his plans and recommendations for such^a a structure and had voted to present them to the Citizens' Committee for study.¹

Having secured approval for setting aside the Wallace bequest as the nucleus for the financing of a library-museum building, Chait was ready to move forward. On January 3, 1955, he was given informal authorization to invite a group of interested individuals to form a steering committee to spearhead the citizens' movement for a new library. He therupon invited forty-six persons to serve as the core of a citizens' committee to study Library needs.²

This group met Tuesday evening, January 25, in the Academy of Medicine room in the Van Deusen Library. At this meeting a committee of thirty-eight was organized to study present facilities and needs of the library system. M. Eugene Malone was chosen chairman, Mrs. Kenneth L. Crawford, co-chairman, and Mrs. Albert J. Pufall, secretary. The committee was broken down into numerous sub-committees, which were delegated to make studies of every phase of the Library's facilities, services, needs and future planning. The primary aim of this organization, which assumed the name of the Citizens' Committee for the Public Library, was to advise and confer with the Board on the problems of providing a new library-museum building and to conduct such campaigns or programs as might seem advisable. Membership was open to all interested persons.³

On February 9 twenty members of the committee met to adopt by-laws and approve a motion to proceed toward its goal immediately. Carl C. Blankenburg was elected treasurer and John Anderson was chosen to complete the executive board of the group. In his informal report on the conditions existing in the Library and Museum buildings, Anderson made it clear that no more weight could be added to the floors of the old structures.⁴

The Citizens' Committee for the Public Library reported formally to the Board on May 15, but its recommendations had been

presented informally on April 27 and discussed then.

The main points of the committee's report were:

1. Kalamazoo ~~can~~ ^{could} have a new public library and museum building at a tax cost that would not exceed one dollar per \$1,000 valuation assessed over a five-year period.
2. The cost of the new building was estimated at about a million dollars.
3. The proposed building should be a modern, functional and flexible structure that would meet the needs of the Kalamazoo community for twenty years, and should have an area of 59,040 square feet, of which 43,860 was to be allotted to the Library and 15,180 to the Museum.
4. The present site was regarded as adequate and the committee saw no advantage in making a change in the location of the proposed building. The statement was made in the report that "Present site recommended unless a site is found which offers advantages in location or in money."
5. October 3, 1955, was suggested as the date for a millage vote on the committee's recommendations. ⁵

Shortly after accepting the Citizens' Committee's report, the Board chose Louis C. Kingscott and Associates to draw preliminary plans and develop a simple model of the proposed library-museum building; ~~these plans were approved on July 25.~~ It was planned that the structure would occupy seventy-five percent of the present site, the remaining area to be used for a parking lot, where a drive-in window was to be provided. The cost of the building was estimated at \$1,198,832, including equipment. By the end of August the architects had completed their plans for the project and had released the first sketches. ⁶

As soon as it had been announced that the matter of a new library-museum building would be submitted to the voters of the school district, suggestions and alternate proposals for the project were presented. Two members of the Board, Frank H. Moss and Leonard Cookson, met with representatives of the City Commission to discuss various parking proposals for the new library. Vice-Mayor Henry Upjohn suggested roof parking, a facility that would provide space for 125 cars at a total cost of \$125,000. This facility was to be financed by the City Commission and a portion of the returns

above operating costs was to allocated to the Library. Basement parking was also considered.⁷

As October 3, the day for the special election approached, considerable support for the proposed library-museum building developed. The directors of the Kalamazoo Chamber of Commerce voted to endorse the proposal, as did the Kalamazoo Federation of Labor. The Kalamazoo Gazette supported the proposal for the new building strongly and gave it full coverage. The Square Deal and the Sutherland News also backed the new building vigorously. Altogether eighteen groups and organizations came out in favor of the new library.

These were, besides those already mentioned: the Junior Chamber of Commerce, American Association of University Women, Cosmopolitan Business and Professional Women's Club, the area P.T.A. Council, Kalamazoo Business and Professional Women's Club, Mothers' Study Council, the executive committee of the Kalamazoo County Council of Churches, Kalamazoo County Republican Women's Club, Kiwanis Club, Rotary Club, Round Table Club, United Veterans Council, Y Men's Club, the board of directors of the Kalamazoo Sales Executives Club, Kalamazoo Dental Society Auxiliary and the Joseph B. West-nedge Post of the American Legion.⁸

The two propositions on which the voters of the school district were asked to make their decision were:

1. Authorization to levy a special voted tax of one dollar per \$1,000 assessed valuation as equalized for a five-year period from 1956 to 1960 inclusive.
2. Authorization to establish a sinking fund until sufficient income was accumulated from voted tax to begin construction.

All voters were eligible to vote on the first one, but only property-owning taxpayers on the second.⁹

The voters of the school district approved both of these proposals by top-heavy majorities. A total of 5,102 ballots were cast:

of these 3,746 were in favor of the first proposition and 3,044 of the second one. The majorities in every one of the ten precincts of the district were favorable, the heaviest voting occurring at West Main, Parkwood and South Junior High School. The vote in this election, however, fell short of the all-time record established at the special election in March 1951, when 8,426 voters turned out to ballot on the five-year school building expansion program which expired in 1955.¹⁰

Before election day Chait had made the observation that if the two enabling proposals passed, it would be possible to begin construction of the new library-museum building early in 1958. About a month later, the Board approved the following schedule, which he had proposed to them, ~~for the new building:~~

December 1, 1955: Begin legal action to clear right of Board to remove present building.
 April 1 to December 31, 1957: Prepare final plans and working drawings.
 July 1, 1957: Order steel stacks to set up in temporary quarters.
 January 1, 1958: Prepare to move library and museum to temporary quarters.
 January and February 1958: Examine plans and specifications for problems and omissions and call for bids to remove present library and museum.
 April 1958: Begin construction of new building.
 August 1959: Complete new building and move in.

At this meeting the Board also extended its thanks to the Kalamazoo Citizens Committee on the Public Library for its role in making the new library possible and requested the committee to continue to serve on a standby basis to meet "any problems or pressures" that might arise.¹¹

On March 19, 1956, the contract to design the new Kalamazoo Public Library-Museum building was awarded to the Kingscott firm, which had previously prepared the preliminary plans, for a fee of five percent. In June the plans for the building were presented

at a session of the annual meeting of the American Library Association in Miami.¹²

Some months after the construction of a new library-museum building had been approved, the site for the proposed structure began to arouse considerable discussion. A number of influential individuals favored a new location, because they felt that the present site was very expensive and valuable and therefore should be on the tax rolls of the city. The Chamber of Commerce endorsed a resolution urging the Board of Education to consider a new location and make the present property available for community development. The suggestion was also made that the old library building be converted into a museum.¹³

The Kalamazoo Citizens Committee for the Public Library met on July 12 with representatives of the Kalamazoo Board of Realtors, the retailers' committee of the Chamber of Commerce and the Board of Education. After extended discussion, it was agreed that a thorough study of all possible locations had been made before the committee had recommended the retention of the present location, and that no further study was necessary.¹⁴

Then the Board of Education was offered \$304,260 for the Library site by the First National Bank and Trust Company, the offer accompanied by a check for \$25,000 as a good faith deposit. Although certain prominent people and business men favored a new site for the Library, many of its patrons objected strongly to such suggestions. Chait reported that he had received a lot of furious reaction "to the proposal to change location"; the Board also served notice that it did not intend to change the location of the Library and voted unanimously that the site was not for sale.¹⁵

II

While it was true that most of the excitement centered

around the new library, there were other important developments in the library system.

On February 6, 1956, the Milwood area was annexed by a favorable vote of 1,353 to 240. This annexation added one school, a school station, -- a community library operating within the school library to the library system, and eight thousand people to the population of the school district.¹⁶

Shortly after the the Milwood annexation, Chait proposed a bookmobile to serve the outlying areas--areas that were without branch libraries and elementary schools without library services. He described bookmobile service as a stop-gap means of providing expanded library service until funds became available to construct more branch libraries and library facilities in all elementary schools. The Board instructed him to study the plan and bring it definite recommendations. The purchase of a bookmobile was approved in late February and a month later Chait was instructed to ask for bids; on April 10 the \$16,144.34 contract was awarded to the Gerstenlager Company of Wooster, Ohio. State aid money was earmarked to pay for the bookmobile.

At the time its purchase was authorized in February, plans were made for the bookmobile, when it was placed in service, to visit each elementary school without a book station once every four weeks, and for it to make eight or more one- and two-hour stops in outlying community areas in the late afternoon, evenings, or Saturdays to provide community library service.¹⁷

The statistics for the ten-year period ending June 30, 1955, reveal a consistent growth in the Library's holdings and services. The number of volumes increased from 138,993 to 154,630, the number of registered borrowers from 15,821 to 24,288, and the full-

time staff from $36\frac{1}{2}$ to $38\frac{1}{2}$ persons. The number of items loaned in 1954/55 exceeded 900,000, of which total 740,000 were books, and some 52,000 reference services were provided; ~~and~~ the library and museum budget amounted to more than \$239,000, of which \$156,530 was allocated for salaries, \$20,521 for books and \$26,530 for the Museum. The 1954/55 annual report in which these statistics were given also stated that \$61,244 had been spent for school libraries, but this figure must have been part of the total budget. The population of the school district was estimated at 75,000.¹⁸

III

The future of the Kalamazoo Public Library now seemed serene and certain, but on June 25, 1956 William Chait submitted his resignation as director, effective October 31. He had accepted the position of director of the Dayton, Ohio library system, which was four to five times larger than that of Kalamazoo. He had been queried about the Dayton position in March. In his letter of resignation, Chait recommended that the Board of Education continue to operate the library system as a separate unit under its direct supervision, rather than making it a division of the "unified" administration of the public school system.

"I sincerely believe," he wrote, "that this direct relationship between the director of libraries and the Board of Education is the best way to handle the administration of libraries in Kalamazoo."

In evaluating the year 1955/56, Chait said,

If a history is ever written of this institution, the period from July 1, 1955 to June 30, 1956 will probably take more space than any of the previous eighty-three years of its existence.¹⁹

On October 30 a testimonial dinner was given in honor of Mr. Chait, at which city and school officials joined in paying tribute

to him. M. E. Malone presided over the dinner and Mayor Glenn S. Allen, Jr. and Leonard T. Cookson, president of the Board of Education, expressed the official appreciations.²⁰

William Chait was a capable librarian; his ideas of library service were definite and progressive. The eight years in which he was director of the Kalamazoo Public Library were years of great progress and development. The Library needed a man who was persistent, diplomatic and ingenious, and Chait was one who had these qualities. He also had a warm, dynamic personality and had the enthusiastic respect and cooperation of most of the members of the staff, many of whom regarded him as a personal friend. He was highly respected and well liked in State library circles and had assumed the presidency of the Michigan Library Association in October 1955.²¹

IV

The appointment of Mark Crum of Charleston, Virginia, as director of the Kalamazoo Public Library System, was announced by the Board of Education on September 6, the appointment to become effective October 28. ~~Cr~~He was the Board's unanimous choice.²²

Mark Crum was a native of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and had received his B. S. degree in library science from the Carnegie Library School at the University of Pittsburgh. During World War II he had served as an Army artillery officer and had been recalled to active duty at the outbreak of the Korean War in 1951. During this term of service, he served as an Army librarian. Shortly after receiving his degree in library science, he became first assistant in a branch of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and in 1948 he was advanced to the position of administrative assistant, in which position he remained until 1950. During the four years previous to his accepting the appointment to the Kalamazoo Library

System, Crum was head librarian of the Kanawha^{County} Public Library in West Virginia.²³

It is interesting to note the salary of the director of the library system at this time. On April 16, 1956, Chait's contract was renewed at \$9,500; when Crum was hired, his salary was set at \$8,000. At the same time, the salary of Loy Norrix, superintendent of schools, was \$15,800 and that of C. Carroll Crawford, business manager, \$11,000.

The first task facing Crum, upon assuming the position of director, was that of placing the bookmobile into service. It was delivered on Friday, October 26, and Bernard Oppeneer was appointed the first librarian of the service.

The new director's first official recommendation to the Board of Education was the schedule for the bookmobile and the date for the beginning of the service. Ten community and fourteen school stops, including four parochial schools--South Christian, North Christian, St. Augustine and St. Joseph, were placed in the schedule. The bookmobile was open for public inspection on November 23, and service began on Monday, November 26, the first stop being made at the Wilson School.²⁴

The bookmobile was well accepted and in a few months the service became so popular that it was necessary to borrow a thousand books from the State Library Development Book Collection in order to extend the service to the Burke Acres community, which, along with the Oakwood district, had been annexed recently. Heavy demand had reduced the reserve stock of children's books in the Van Deusen Room collection to less than a hundred. In January 1957 the circulation of books at the community stops rose to 2,300, an increase of four hundred over December. By the end of February

the total circulation had increased to 2,978, but people were also beginning to comment on the lack of books and the poor selection that was available.³⁵

Before turning to the actual construction of the new library-museum building, the death of Flora B. Roberts should be noted. Miss Roberts died in January 1957, at the age of eighty-four in Northville, Michigan. She had been in ill health since her retirement in 1942. Soon after her death, the staff association of the Public Library began sponsoring a memorial fund in her honor. Eleanor Ricker was appointed chairman of the memorial committee and Lillian B. Anderson and Bessie Jane Reed were chosen as the other two members.³⁶ Some years later a silver tea service was given in honor of Miss Roberts with the following inscription on the tray: "Tea service presented by staff and Friends in memory of Flora B. Roberts."

V

Although putting the bookmobile into service and setting its schedule were Crum's immediate tasks, the new library was his major concern. He was well qualified for the work of planning the building and carrying the plans for it to completion, being methodical, careful and able to give close attention to the many details involved. In fact, some of those who have worked under him have felt at times that he was too deliberate and cautious, and that the administration of the Library has suffered occasionally because of his hesitancy and caution.

On May 20, 1957, the preliminary plans for the proposed library-museum building were presented and adopted. By this time it had become evident that since construction costs had risen eighteen percent, it would be necessary to revise the building plans in order to keep costs within an estimated reserve of \$1,450,016.

This was accomplished by reducing the area of the structure by about eleven percent under that which had been originally planned in early 1955. Crum informed the Board that this reduction would not adversely affect the Library's facilities. In July it was estimated that the cost of the building would be \$1,521,800. An increase, however, in the State valuation of the property tax of the ^{district increased} school⁴ the estimate of the amount to be raised by the special one-mill tax to \$1,521,822. The Wallace bequest made another \$25,000 available, so that it was possible to restore the cuts that had been ordered in May.²⁷

The preliminary plans provided space for a planetarium in the Museum. A planetarium for the new building was first suggested by the Kalamazoo Amateur Astronomical Association, which had raised \$8,000 in an informal drive. Hans Baldauf, an enthusiastic amateur astronomer, was the president of the association at the time. In October 1957 Crum recommended to the Board of Education that the Library and Museum directors be authorized to present a request to the Kalamazoo Foundation for a grant to ensure and equip a planetarium. Early in June 1958, the foundation offered the Board of Education \$20,000 to provide the planetarium and \$13,000 to cover the cost of fabricating and painting a giant six foot, three inch geophysical globe. Only four of these large globes were in existence at the time and the Kalamazoo Public Museum was the first museum in the world to own one of these large models.²⁸

At the same time that the Board of Education and the Library director were concentrating on the plans for the new building, they also had to consider Dr. Van Deusen's stipulation made when he gave \$50,000 for the library building in 1890 that a room should be provided for the Academy of Medicine in perpetuity. School attorney Henry Ford, Jr., however, advised them²⁹ that the obsolescence

of the Van Deusen building, the long lapse of time since the gift was made, the change in circumstances, and the fact that the building would be razed voided the conditions under which Van Deusen had made the grant.

In May 1957, representatives of the Academy of Medicine, Board of Education and Library met to discuss the use of the new building by the Academy of Medicine. Results of the meeting were encouraging, for the academy did not demand rights and privileges that would adversely affect the use of the Library. Dr. John V. Fopeano, president of the Academy of Medicine, however, asserted that the academy "still has a vested right in the (academy) room," and that "it wouldn't be fair to Dr. Van Deusen to sign off these rights."

Two months later the Board ~~of Education~~ adopted a resolution voiding the Van Deusen stipulation; this action ^{being} ~~was~~ opposed by two of its members. It was also voted to provide for a suitable memorial to Dr. Van Deusen in the new library-museum building by naming its auditorium in his honor, by a plaque in the new building memorializing him, and by giving the Academy of Medicine the right to use the auditorium for its annual meetings for ten years at no charge. In November the academy was notified that it must remove its belongings from the Van Deusen Library by January 1, 1958.²⁹

Temporary quarters for the Library and Museum were chosen in late November. They were to be located in the Grace Corset Company building on Eleanor and Church Streets, a building that had been standing there since the 1880's. The Board authorized a lease of 22,560 square feet ~~in the building~~ at a monthly rate of \$916, for a period of fifteen months, with the privilege of a nine-months extension. The rooms in these quarters were entirely renovated and

the walls painted in pleasing colors. The fluorescent light fixtures were removed from the old building and installed in the temporary quarters, and new book stacks, which eventually would be used in the new building, were purchased to hold the books.³⁰

VI

At 6:00 on the evening of January 19, 1958, the Van Deusen Library, which had served the city and school district of Kalamazoo since 1893, closed its doors for the last time. Although almost everyone recognized the need for a new building, there were feelings of sadness and regret on the part of many as service in the venerable old building ended. Before it closed its doors for the last time, sentimental visits were made to the old library and museum by many, some of whom had not been in the buildings for twenty years. Others borrowed books ahead, so that 10,707 volumes were loaned during January, compared to a normal circulation of 9,000.³¹

Moving the Library and Museum to temporary quarters began on January 21, and library service was suspended for two weeks, to be resumed on February 3. Eighty thousand books had to be moved, besides the Museum exhibits, many of which, however, were put in storage. Most of the furnishings of the old buildings also had to be dismantled and then installed in the new location. The work of moving the Library and Museum to the Grace Corset Company building was an exciting but hard experience. Many members of their staffs became ill with bad colds and the flu, a condition aggravated by the cold drafts that swept through the building, especially when the south and east doors were open at the same time as the truckers moved in more library materials and equipment. The weather also was cold and stormy during most of the time and not at all suitable for a project like this.

Probably the most frustrating problem of all was that of

getting the books on the shelves in proper order. During the relocation process, half of the books were taken from the shelf and then heavy rubber bands cut from truck inner tubes were placed around them. This seemed like a good idea, but was one that didn't always work. Quite frequently the books would buckle, especially if they were of different sizes, and lie scrambled on the floor. But in spite of problems like this and others and the inclement weather, the Library was again open for business at the end of two weeks.

Although the temporary rooms were not as commodious as could be desired, the Library and Museum staffs were quite comfortable during the sixteen months that they were in these quarters, and it was possible to give reasonably adequate service. The children's room probably worked under the greatest difficulty, for just above it was the heavy equipment of the Gibson Company, and when the sanders and other machines were turned on, it was difficult to hear. Another inconvenience, and not just in the children's room, was the fine sawdust that permeated everything.

Although there were difficulties and inconveniences, there existed among the members of the staff a camaraderie that is still remembered by those who had a part in this experience. Every department of the Library and Museum was on the same floor and the fellowship was close and friendly. It was the closeness that the staff of a small library could enjoy, and though moving to the new library was looked forward to with great anticipation, the workers were aware of a few emotions of regret as they realized that the close fellowship was coming to an end.

The bids for the new building were opened on January 21, 1958. As this was done, it became evident that keen competitive bidding had served to hold costs below previous estimates, making it

possible to include complete air conditioning and other desirable facilities in the building. Eight firms from Kalamazoo, Ann Arbor, Flint, Grand Rapids, Detroit and Minneapolis bid for the general contract, which was awarded to Miller-Davis of Kalamazoo for \$781,450 and \$42,450 for alternates. The electrical contract was given to Sandman Electric Company at a base bid of \$106,984, plus \$1,735 for alternates; the mechanical one to Miller-Davis Plumbing and Heating Company at \$267,547, and \$3,643 for alternates; and the contract for the elevators to Independent Elevator Company for \$31,683. The contracts awarded totaled \$1,189,385, including the added cost for alternates, or \$99,320 under the architect's estimate.³²

The demolishing of the old library and museum buildings began on February 4. To see the heavy wrecking ball swing against the walls of the Van Deusen Library, one of the few remaining examples of Richardsonian Romanesque architecture in Kalamazoo, brought a pang to many ~~library~~ patrons, as well as to the members of the library staff. Some of those who watched its demolition, remembered when the building was an exciting addition to Kalamazoo. Those who wished to have souvenir stones were permitted to take them without charge.³³

Some of the mosaic windows were also preserved. These windows represented a nineteenth-century revival of a medieval art form that reached its peak in the thirteenth century. This revival was an American achievement that attained its greatest triumph at the hands of John La Farge, who created the magnificent opalescent windows in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City. Although the windows in the Van Deusen Library could not be classed with La Farge's work, they were superior to much of the

work done in Europe and the United States at the time.³⁴

By the middle of March the work of razing the two structures was completed and March 17 was set as the date for the ground-breaking ceremony. It was brief and informal and the participants were M. Eugene Malone, Robert C. Innis, vice-president of the Board of Education, Mark Crum and Alexis Praus.³⁵

The plans for the laying of the building's cornerstone were announced two months later, the exact date depending on the progress of construction. The members of the cornerstone committee were Alexis A. Praus, chairman, A. G. Macleod of the Upjohn Company, Willis F. Dunbar, a member of the Michigan Historical Society and of the faculty of Western Michigan University, Martin Cohen, community group counselor of the Public Library, Archie Nevins, a member of the Kalamazoo County Historical Society, and Samuel Bennett of the W. E. Upjohn Institute for Community Research.³⁶

VII

While progress on the construction of the new library-museum building was going on apace, both the school administration and ~~that of~~ the Library were attempting to cope with severe financial uncertainties. In the summer of 1958 the voters of the district defeated the proposed voted tax of \$3.39 per \$1000 State equalized valuation. The defeat of the tax may have been due in part to voter resentment over recently constructed school facilities which were regarded by some as being too elaborate and costly. In early August Crum was forced to remind the Board of Education that the new or improved school library service that had been planned for the 1958/59 school year would have to be "severely curtailed" because the funds now available were insufficient.³⁷

In October the Board was forced to cut the already austere budget by another \$250,000, which included most of the Library's

book funds.

In his report for November, Crum had this to say about the Board's decision to cut the book budget by \$40,000:

The evening of October 6, when the decision to wipe out virtually the entire unspent portion of the book budget was made, and the morning of October 7, when it was explained to the library staff, brought to the staff a sense of shock at the magnitude of the cut, of foreboding over the prolonged detrimental effects which a year of non-purchasing would have on the collections and service, and of conviction that the adult population of the school district would make known its need and desire for books, its support of the library, and its willingness to vote necessary money for the support of the library.³⁶

Everyone who attended the staff meeting of October 7 recalls vividly the shock that came over him when the director announced that the book budget had for all practical purposes been obliterated. For several moments the members of the staff reacted as if they had not heard correctly. Soon, however, the initial shock was replaced by anger--anger that the Board should have the temerity to wipe out the book budget, and anger that Crum had permitted it to do this.

In fairness to the Board, it should be said that it faced a desperate situation: an already tight budget had to be cut by another \$250,000 and it was extremely difficult to find places where further cuts could be made. The book budget was ruthlessly slashed because to the members of the Board the loss of this item seemed less serious than failing to balance the school budget.

Perhaps Crum should have been more alert on the evening of October 6, but in his defense it should be noted that he had never considered the possibility that the Board would lay its hands on practically all of the book budget, and when its members quickly accepted the president's proposal to eliminate the book budget, Crum was so shocked that he was able to say but little. It seemed unbelievable to him that the Board would or could do this.

The Board met again on Saturday, October 11, in a four-hour long extension of the regular Monday evening session, and continued to wield a ruthless axe in order to get the school budget in line with the anticipated income. The budget had originally been set at \$6,154,649, and the district's income after the millage failure was estimated at \$5,904,087. The Board succeeded in cutting the \$250,000 deficit down to \$16,482. Of the various departments of the school administration, that of maintenance suffered the greatest cut--\$63,043, and the Library the second largest--\$46,000. The latter's budget had ~~already~~ been cut \$6,000 before the meetings of October 6 and 11.

During the following months a large number of highly critical letters, protesting the wiping out of the Library's book budget, were written. These letters irritated some of the Board members, and especially Leonard Cookson, its president, who had made the suggestion that the book budget be slashed.

The acrimonious debate on the loss of the book budget was not the only controversy that embittered relations between the Board and librarians. Thomas Bowman, who had been appointed superintendent of schools soon after the sudden death of Dr. Loy Norrix, proposed that the school libraries be placed under his jurisdiction. His proposal immediately aroused the anger of nearly every librarian in the Kalamazoo area, many of whom attended the meetings of the Board to protest Bowman's suggestion.

About the same time ^{he} ~~Bowman~~ made the further proposal that a merit plan for the teachers of the school system be adopted. Now not only the librarians but also the teachers were up in arms and the atmosphere in the school system became tense and bitter. At a number of Board meetings there were sharp exchanges between

one or two of the members and Bowman.

Then he ordered the discontinuance of religious observances, such as Easter and Christmas, in the schools. This enraged many of the residents of the district. Although Bowman's policies had merit, their timing was inopportune and he only succeeded in alienating and irritating too many people, and the Board consequently deemed it politic to refuse to renew his contract. Dr. Richard Percy, his assistant and a teacher and administrator who had spent many years in the Kalamazoo school system, was appointed Bowman's successor. Percy was highly esteemed and respected by many of the school teachers.

Meanwhile, service at the Library's temporary quarters was the order of the day. Its patrons were unhappy over the lack of new books, but their complaints were directed to the Board rather than to the Library administration. It is true that nearly \$28,000 had been spent for library materials during the months of July, August and September, but over three-fourths of this money had been used to purchase books and other items for the schools, especially the new junior high schools of Hillside and Oakwood. Gifts were the only new books that the Library acquired during this period. Besides these gifts, the only books that the Technical Processing Department had to process were those that had been ordered for the school libraries. When the Library was moved into the new building, there was absolutely no backlog in the Cataloging Department--its shelves were as bare as Mother Hubbard's proverbial cupboard.

VIII

While the school and Library administrations were concerned with millage failures, administrative crises and shortage of funds, work on the new library-museum building continued to move ahead. There were few serious problems. One episode that aroused the

displeasure of the Library staff was the elimination of Kalamazoo from the name on the new building. Crum reported that it would cost an additional one thousand dollars to include Kalamazoo; whereupon the Board decided that the name on the faces of the building should be simply "Public Library and Museum." In April 1959 it approved the application of gold to the letters being cut into the exterior of the building, which added \$215 to construction costs.³⁹

.Seven months earlier the Board had approved Crum's recommendation of the wording on the bronze plaque to be placed in the new library-museum building. The statement, as approved, read:

Kalamazoo Public Library and Museum

A Division of the School District of the City of Kalamazoo
This Library-Museum Building replaces the one donated by Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Van Deusen in 1893. An addition to the original site in 1929 was made possible through the generosity of Dr. W. E. Uphohn. In 1955 the citizens of the School District of the City of Kalamazoo voted funds for the erection of this building for the education, inspiration and recreation of future generations. Dedicated March, 1959.

With the exception of the date, which was later changed to May, 1959, this is the wording of the plaque that was mounted in the foyer of the new library building. In approving Crum's recommendation, the Board specified that mention of Dr. Uphohn's gift was to be included only with the consent of his direct heirs.⁴⁰

On Thursday, October 16, 1958, at 11 a.m., the cornerstone of the building was laid, with M. Eugene Malone, president of the Committee on the Library and Museum, presiding. The stone was placed in the wall facing South Rose Street, just south of the future main entrance, and a flat stone, with the simple inscription "1959 " in gold letters, was placed in front of the niche.

The cornerstone box was a copperlined, 18" x 14" x 8" container,

prepared by Museum Director Alexis A. Praus. The box contains the story of Kalamazoo in 1958 in the form of written, photographed and recorded messages. In it were placed such articles as a golf ball, Kalamazoo-made cigars and a cigar lighter, bus, rail and airline schedules, copies of the Kalamazoo Gazette, coins, stamps, paper money, a Civic Players program, keys to the old library, recordings of the Kalamazoo Salvation Army band, the sound of a parking meter and other items and sounds characteristic of the city scene in 1958.

Among those introduced at the corner-stone laying ceremony were Mrs. Horace Haines, daughter of former superintendent of schools Henry N. French, who had been present when the cornerstone was placed in the Van Deusen Library, Jeanne Griffin of Niles, former chief librarian, Archie Nevins of the Kalamazoo Historical Society, Mrs. Carl Blankenberg, a long time civic and cultural leader in the city, Mrs. Hazel Maloney of the Friends of the Library Association, Mrs. C. L. Buckhelder, first president of the Friends of the Library, members of the Kalamazoo Board of Education and Library and Museum directors Mark Crum and Alexis A. Praus.

Leonard Cookson, president of the Board of Education gave a brief address in which he described the cornerstone box as the "physical evidence left to future generations of people as a way of assuring that life will be good in Kalamazoo in future generations."⁴¹

During the last week of December, the bids for the furniture and equipment for the building were received, and early in January the Board accepted eight of them, totaling \$93,957.46. There were \$5,331.30 for carpeting; \$2,850.80, draperies; \$26,372.05, stack library furnishings made by Remington Rand Company; \$46,165.55, special library equipment; and \$13,337.76, library tables, miscellaneous tables and chairs. Later in the month three more bids for furniture were accepted, bringing the total accepted

bids for furniture and equipment to nearly \$130,000.⁴²

Construction on the new building was progressing so rapidly now that the Board tentatively set April 5 as the date for its dedication; on January 19, however, Crum recommended that the date be changed to Sunday, May 24, because the time required toⁱnstall the furnishings and equipment would not permit the earlier date. The globe and planetarium arrived during the week of January 22.

On April 15 four members of the Board, accompanied by Crum and Praus, and representatives of the architect, general contractor and sub-contractors, toured the new building. In early May the building was officially accepted and plans were announced for a week-long series of dedication programs. Plans were also made to move into the new building between May 13 or 14 and 24.⁴³

IX

The undertaking of moving into the new building had considerable community support, although much of the work was done by the Library staff and professional movers. The Junior Chamber of Commerce, assisted by other civic groups, organized Operation Library, whereby it hoped to save the taxpayers an estimated \$5,000. Among the civic groups and businesses that aided the JC's were the Key Club, Library Youth Council, Alvan Motor Freight Lines, the Upjohn Company, the Kalamazoo Board of Education, Clemens Truck Line, Michigana Paper Company and Hybels Produce Company. Several of these loaned boxes or cartons which made the work of transferring the books much easier.

The JC's began the work of moving on March 7, and Martin Cohen, Community Group Counselor of the Library, worked on four Saturdays with volunteers from that organization, the Library Youth Council and the Key Club to move many of the Museum materials in storage,

a few books and the furniture belonging to the Bookmobile Department. On April 8 Operation Library halted its activities because the turnout of workers had been so great.⁴⁴

The last full day of service at the Library's temporary quarters was Wednesday, May 13; no book loans or services were offered from May 14 through Sunday, May 24.⁴⁵

By May 20 the new Library and Museum were ready for service. Most of the books had been moved, many of them having been placed on the shelves by members of the Library Youth Council and the Central High Key Club, and the furniture and equipment were in place. The staff of the Library and Museum too had worked hard and happily to get everything in order. Many of the Museum's materials and the old furniture still had to be transferred, but this did not interfere with the building's readiness for service. Of the building itself it could be said that it was beautiful and attractive, the color scheme generally delighted the eye, and everywhere the clean, fresh smell of a new building prevailed.

The structure was not perfect; it had its defects, most of which were corrected during the first year. But these were not concerns that disturbed the staff and patrons of the Library; they looked forward to the opening of their new new Library and Museum with excitement and anticipation.

A few weeks before the building was dedicated, a new Friends of the Kalamazoo Public Library and Museum was organized. The new organization met there for its first annual meeting on May 6 and its members were given a tour of the building. The new Friends comprised one hundred volunteer members and on its board were Charles M. Lynch, M. Eugene Malone, Mrs. A. J. Pufall, Irving Schensul, William R. Stone and Eunice Le Fevre, elected for two-year terms, and

John Anderson, Mrs. Robert Beisel, Mrs. Robert Huston, Charles Pratt, Mrs. H. M. Snow and Robert Woodhams, for one-year terms.^{4/6}

The building that was now ready for dedication was a structure that was functional in design, with simple yet attractive lines. Its measurements are approximately 130' x 210', the area of each floor being 27,300 square feet, and its height is 32' 7". Provision was also made for the expansion of library and museum facilities and services, for the building structure is strong enough to support the addition of a third floor. In planning the new Kalamazoo Public Library and Museum, care was taken to create an inviting, informal atmosphere while retaining conditions favorable to leisurely browsing and serious study. The streamlined, flexible arrangement permits the expansion of operations with no increase in personnel. The building has structural steel frame and concrete floor slabs, with exterior walls of porcelain enameled metal panels and glass set in aluminum frames. A portion of the exterior wall is composition granite, while columns at the main entrance are faced with ceramic tile.

Liberal expanses of glass at the ground floor level permit visitors immediately to identify the purpose of the building and to be attracted inside. Library facilities are found on the first floor, grouped for use by various age levels and reading desires. Included is an audio-visual room, areas designated for children and young people, and other rooms to aid the Library staff in performing its functions. The second floor contains the Museum, with its main exhibition hall, special exhibit rooms, a loan department and the planetarium. An auditorium, the Library offices, a staff room and facilities for the Technical Processing, Cataloging and Bookmobile departments are also located on this floor.

The architects had originally designed small windows for the second floor, but some of the staff objected to them, declaring that the small windows reminded them of a medieval monastery. Consequently, they were greatly enlarged so that much of the second floor was glass. This undoubtedly made ^{for} a more attractive appearance, but heat radiation through this great expanse of glass made it very difficult for the air conditioning system to cool the rooms involved effectively.⁴⁷

The major dedicatory event occurred on Sunday, May 24, at 3:00 in the afternoon. The speaker was Ralph Munn, director of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In his address Munn stated that in all his forty years as a librarian, he had never seen a library "in which appearance and functional quality of building is more happily joined." He viewed the new library-museum as an important factor in bringing public services and cultural facilities in balance with a prevalent American over-emphasis of resources and "gadgets."

"Books," the speaker emphasized, "are a threat to those who attempt to enslave the minds of men... One of the first precautions taken by a dictator is to destroy the written record as it differs from his doctrine."

Those participating in the ceremony were M. Eugene Malone, chairman, Leonard T. Cookson, Ralph Munn, the Rev. Richard Beckett, Mark Crum and Alexis A. Praus. Cookson, president of the Board of Education, noted that the new building was the result of "many hours of work" by citizen groups and the school board. He then introduced the other members of the Board: Mrs. Arthur L. Loring, John M. Rudell, James H. Wilson, William Pontz and Robert C. Innis and Superintendent of Schools, Thomas R. Bowman. The seventh member, E.

Wendell Smith, was unable to be present. Also introduced were Jeanne Griffin, William Chait, Mrs. Kenneth L. Crawford, general chairman for dedication week, and Hans Baldauf, who had done so much to secure the planetarium for the new building. Brief remarks were then made by Malone, Crum, Praus and Miss Griffin.

Malone said that the building was the result of a cooperative effort on the part of the citizens to make Kalamazoo "a better place to live." Miss Griffin declared the new library-museum building to be "the fruition of all of our hopes."

The formal dedication ceremony was attended by an audience of 470 in the Van Deusen Auditorium and by another hundred in an overflow area. An estimated 2,500 toured the building between 2:30 and 5:30 in the afternoon. As the new library was dedicated and inspected, a feeling of sadness and regret that Flora B. Roberts, who had done so much to make Kalamazoo Public Library a modern library and who had so longed for a "commodious" new building, had not lived to see it, pervaded the minds of some of the older librarians and patrons.

On Monday evening, May 25, Dr. Willis F. Dunbar, professor of history at Western Michigan University, spoke on "Custodian of the Community's Culture." Tuesday evening featured an "Evening with the Authors and Books," with Dr. William R. Brown from the university and Mrs. Lucy D. Fluent Gallup, a member of the Library staff, as speakers. The program on Wednesday evening, "Fashion and its Family Tree" displayed the costumes and accessories worn by women from 1830 to the present. The modeling and commentary was done by members of the Detroit Historical Society Guild, and the program was sponsored by Gilmore Brothers Department Store. On Thursday Carl H. Mapes, chief map maker of Rand McNally Company, spoke on

"The Role of the Globe in the Age of Space." Friday, the last day of dedication week, featured an evening of story telling for children and their parents.

Throughout the week special demonstrations of the planetarium and frequent tours of the building were scheduled. Altogether over 1,100 attended the dedication service and evening programs and thousands toured the building.⁴⁸

The new Library-Museum opened for service on Monday morning, May 25. Gloria La Qua, a tenth-grade student from Central High School, charged out the first books and Janet Teale, assistant circulation librarian, made the charge. A total of 1,920 books were loaned, which according to Crum was "four times that for an average Monday."⁴⁹

X

Kalamazoo now had a beautiful, functional library-museum building, but the question that perturbed the director, members of the staff and many of the patrons was, "Would there be sufficient funds available to provide the books and materials necessary to make it a good library?" During the first month in the new building demands for books already exceeded the Library's resources, and the Boys and Girls Department had to borrow 1,800 from the school stations and limits were placed on the number of books a child could borrow. In October Crum noted that the circulation of the Library was hampered by the lack of new titles.

He was aware that the book collection would have to be surveyed and greatly strengthened if the Public Library was to achieve the potential that the new building had made possible. The Friends of the Library realized this too and on May 25, 1960, they applied to the Kalamazoo Foundation for a \$250,000 grant to be used for an

inventory-analysis of the Library's book collection and for the purchase and processing of the materials needed to strengthen and enrich its holdings. The foundation, however, did not see its way clear to grant this application.⁵⁰

If this money had been granted, the Library would have had a book collection up-to-date and strong in the areas of business and technology and the multiple copies so badly needed in the fields of high patron demand.

In his May-June 1959 monthly report, Crum noted that there had been no substantial or significant criticism of the new building; many of the patrons and visitors had commented that it was beautiful, wonderful and fine. He further reported that the Museum, with its globe and planetarium, had become in some ways the most spectacular agency in the building. Since May 23, 3,099 persons had seen planetarium demonstrations and loans of Museum materials had reached almost 6,000 in June, a third more than the total of any previous June. This showing was even more remarkable when one considers that at the time most of its materials were still in storage and many of the display cases were filled with exhibits provided by companies like Michigan Bell.

Loans of Museum materials during March 1960 totaled 11,869, an increase of 6,879 items over the average March loans for the previous nine years; two years later the loans exceeded 12,600, which set another record. Thirty-two new exhibits were placed in circulation and twenty-six planetarium shows were given, attended by 835 persons. In 1960/61 over 10,000 individuals visited the Museum, 8,587 of them viewing planetarium ~~programs~~⁵¹ ~~MS.~~

After the failure of the millage vote in the fall of 1958, prospects for both library and school systems were bleak. Many of

the residents of the school district, however, realized that more funds were needed if the schools and the Library were to be adequately financed. Consequently, the Committee of 1001 was organized and it immediately began to educate the voters on the needs of the school district. The committee's efforts were successful, for, on March 2, 1959, the voters authorized the Board of Education to levy a special operating tax of up to five dollars per \$1,000 State equalization during the next two years.⁵²

With this favorable millage vote the Board was able to develop a budget for both Public Library and schools that met many of the requirements of both institutions. In April it adopted a tentative budget of \$6,856,640 for the schools and \$506,804 for the Library and Museum. In October the latter's budget was changed to \$502,804, which, however, still compared favorably with the original 1958/59 budget of \$455,541, but which austerity cuts had reduced to \$358,753. The Board was now able to allocate some \$20,000 in extra funds to the Public Library, which enabled it to recoup some of its losses in book purchases. This amount, plus the regular book budget and building and site funds for the new school libraries, brought the money designated for the purchase of books and other library materials for the year 1959/60 to over \$110,000. Although an offset press was purchased for the Cataloging Department to expedite the production of cards for the card catalogs of the library system, it was impossible for the department to process many of these materials, mostly books, and they were stored on the overflowing shelves in the basement. At the end of the fiscal year there were still between 15,000 and 20,000 uncataloged books.⁵³

The obvious acceptance of the new building by the patrons of the Library was indicated by a gratifying increase in book loans.

In 1958/59 the loans totaled 914,866, a good record for that year of austerity; the following year, however, the circulation rose to 996,761. Perhaps it should be noted that the circulation for the year 1955/56 had been only 770,985, so that the total for 1959/60 represented an increase of over 225,000 in the five-year period. During the same period the book stock grew from 163,130 to 238,270 volumes, the number of reference questions answered from 25,489 to 34,502, and staff size from 42 $\frac{1}{2}$ to 69 $\frac{1}{4}$ persons.⁵⁴

In 1960/61 book loans increased by another 80,000 volumes, bringing the total to 1,075,760, or about one book per month for every man, woman and child in the school district. The Kalamazoo Public Library had now joined the elite group of public libraries with circulations of one million or more and a blue banner, publicizing this achievement, flew from its flag pole. Of the 7,204 public libraries in the nation, only eighty-two reported circulations of a million or more in 1960. The millionth book, Mystery of the Old Place, by May Nickerson Wallace, was checked out by Lee Percy, the eight-year old son of Dr. Richard Percy, superintendent of schools, on May 27, 1961, and Mrs. Arthur L. Loring, vice-president of the Board of Education, presented Lee with a gold library card and a souvenir of the old library.⁵⁵

The loans for the year represented a combined public and school library circulation of 11.28 books per capita, which compared very favorably with the average of 5.48 per capita for cities of 50,000 to 100,000 population. Every third person in Kalamazoo held an active library card and the number of registered borrowers increased from 26,039 in 1955/56 to 36,479 in 1960/61. In March 1960 reserves for books rose to 943, the highest number ever recorded. In February the Board had authorized Crum to use State

aid money to initiate a contract with the American Lending Library. Books from this service facilitated the quicker filling of reserves; it also made popular titles available sooner and permitted the Library to rent books that had a current interest, but not a lasting one. For these reasons the lending program had a good public relations value.

The 1960/61 circulation figures could be broken down as follows: 330,057 volumes for the main library; branches and hospitals, 127,128; bookmobile, 116,769; school libraries, 274,679; and school stations, 227,127. And during the years, book loans continued to increase; in 1961/62, for example, the total circulation was 1,159,000, the millionth book being charged on March 24.

Activities in the Boys and Girls Department were an example of what was happening in the rest of the library system. In 1957 the children of Kalamazoo borrowed 5,172 books in January; but in January 1964, the total was 10,769 volumes. During the fifty-four months between January 1958 and June 1962, book loans in the children's department exceeded those of the same months of the previous year in thirty-nine cases, or 72 percent of the time.⁵⁶

Yet in the face of these burgeoning circulations and a steady increase in book costs, the book budget remained comparatively static. During the time that the circulation of the children's department increased 58 percent, its book budget increased only 20 percent. The holdings of the department consisted of 16,000 volumes; in order for it to do justice to the demands being placed upon it, however, it should have had 60,000. Indeed, the Library's book budget has seldom been adequate. Through the years the amount allocated for books and other library materials has remained between \$35,000 and \$75,000. the latter figure being representative

of the later years only, Since book costs continued to climb, the Library was able to purchase fewer books in 1965 than it had in 1959. The average price of books in 1963 was \$6.55, compared with the index figure of \$3.59 for the years 1947-1949.

Although the book holdings of the system increased from 163,000 in 1956/57 to 266,809 in 1960/61, much of this increase was found in the school libraries. In 1955/56 there were only four school libraries and seven book stations; in 1959/60 there were eight and sixteen respectively. The number of accessions during the same period grew from 14,282 to 43,009, but 16,325 of the latter came from building and site funds.⁵⁷

In October 1960 the director presented a four-phase program to the Board of Education, in which he gave first priority to the strengthening of the Library staff. This would involve, he said, "the creation and development of a managerial or supervisory staff to carry on administration and to provide services for the line departments of the organization." Third and fourth priorities were given to the improvement of the book collection and the extension of Library physical outlets through the establishment of branches in concentrated population areas of the city.

The second of Crum's proposals was concerned with the future financing of the operations of the library system. He made this proposal as a means of achieving "a broadened and more equitable basis of support for the library system." In describing his thinking on this matter, Crum said:

One is led to the conclusion that a nearly just arrangement would be one under which the Board of Education supported school library services, while the municipality, by contractual arrangement with the school district, (and with proper representation when the Board of Education sat as a library board), supported public library services.

He felt that such a plan "would be compatible with further

evolution of library support and government in the future," though he conceded that the "surest way" of financing future library needs would be through the continuation of the present practice, if funds would be available for an expanding system.

Some of the citizens of the community were aware of the financial problems that the Library faced. In an editorial the Kalamazoo Gazette stated that there was no question but that the Library was going to require increasing support; the fear was also expressed that it might become the "step-child" of the Board and the suggestion made that Crum's recommendations might well be studied by a joint committee of city, school, county and township representatives.⁵⁸

XI

Even though its book collection was not as complete and extensive and its financial support not as broad and strong as was desirable, the Library was popular; indeed, one might say that popularity was its greatest problem. It was popular with college, university and high school students--to the distress of some of the librarians who were unhappy to see such an influx of young people. The Library was patronized by so many of them that adults who enjoyed going there to read and study found themselves distracted by younger patrons busily and often noisily doing their reading and studying. Librarians who cherished the cloistered atmosphere of the traditional library often had but scant sympathy and understanding for the lively and occasionally boisterous student user, ~~of the Library~~. In an attempt to meet the problems brought on by the heavy student use, a young librarian was hired to act as student adviser in the Reference Department.

The Library was popular not only with the young of Kalamazoo, but also with those from Bangor, Battle Creek, Delton, Hartford,

Hastings, Plainwell and Portage. Demands on the Reference Department were so heavy that its entire staff had to be assigned to cope with them.

As early as January 1960, Crum had observed that the new building was getting so much patronage from non-residents that service to residents was being adversely affected. He said, "Giving space, book use and staff assistance services free to non-residents is diluting and at times preventing our performing those services for residents of the Kalamazoo School District." He therefore recommended to the Board that, effective March 1, the use of all library materials, space, equipment, facilities and staff services at either the main library or branch libraries be extended only to those persons holding a valid library borrowers card.⁵⁹

The Board, however, rejected his recommendations and people from the communities surrounding Kalamazoo continued to use the Kalamazoo Public Library free of charge, and at least one of these communities continued for a number of years to vote down any millage requests for its own library.*

During these years of growing use of the library's materials and services by young people and students, a department was being developed that was organized to give specialized service to these Library users. While the Library was having its financial stringencies during the fall and winter of 1958 and the spring of 1959, the Young Adult Service was changing from an embryonic shelf of books suited to the reading interests of a young adult, to a major recreational and background reading service under the direction of a professional librarian, Mrs. Mary Mace Spradling. As early

* The question of the non-resident library fee will be more fully treated in Chapter 15.

as November 1, 1958, Mrs. Spradling organized the first Library Youth Council of Kalamazoo; members of the council were six students from the junior high schools and six from Central High School, chosen by the school librarians. For some time there had been a feeling on the part of the teachers and students they were not always served as freely and courteously at the main library as was considered desirable. The youth council was therefore organized to serve as a liaison between the schools and the Public Library. Its effectiveness, however, did not reach expectations.⁶⁰

As has already been stated earlier, the great majority of patrons and staff members were well pleased with the new building and conditions within it were pleasant and comfortable. Not until the summer of 1961 was there any serious disruption in this situation. Then on July 7 the air conditions system broke down, causing the most miserable inconvenience that the staff and patrons had experienced during the first years in the new building. The summer of 1961 was very hot, and even though the building engineer circulated as much outside air as possible, the interior temperature was usually extremely uncomfortable.

No steps were taken during the year to repair the system, because both Crum and the Board felt that the large impeller in the air-conditioning mechanism was defective, which the manufacturer of the unit refused to concede. Negotiations between the Library administration and the manufacturer continued throughout the year and finally the latter agreed to replace the impeller, but the Library had to stand the cost of installation. By April 1962 the air-conditioning system was again in operation and everyone involved breathed more easily.⁶¹

Chapter 14
CHANGES, INNOVATIONS, AND CRISIS

I

Soon after the Library was moved into the new building, it became evident that some areas of the structure did not meet the needs or expectations of some of the members of the staff: the office space allotted to the circulation and children's departments was too small; the room occupied by the Technical Processing Departments soon became inadequate, especially as larger book budgets and the addition of school libraries placed greater demands upon those departments; and the Young Adult Department, which occupied part of the large reading room, was not happy with its location. And it must be admitted that it really was not a young adult library, for it was easy for adults to preempt the space set aside for the young people.

The general reading room, the reference reading room, as well as the area set aside for the Young Adult Department, was one large room. Esthetically speaking, this was an attractive arrangement. The passerby on either Rose or South Streets looked upon a pleasing view--the walnut tables and the bright colored chairs and settees.

But the staff of the Reference Department in particular and many of its patrons did not feel at home with this arrangement. Patrons who were interested in serious study were disturbed and irritated by youthful users of the Library who failed to be as quiet and decorous as the older users felt was desirable.

Before the Library had been in its new quarters a year, it became obvious to Crum that it would be desirable to relocate the Reference, Technical Processing and Young Adult departments. On January 15, 1960, the Board of Education authorized him to compile cost data and architectural information on the relocation of these departments. By August of the following year, plans had been drawn for the partitioning of the space on the first and second floors. On January 15, 1962, Crum presented the Board with a plan for relocating the three departments and also for providing room for the School Library Service Department. The plans and specifications for the partitioning of the second floor expansion room for the Bookmobile, Order, Cataloging and School Library departments, and for the relocation of the Reference and Young Adult departments and the circulation book stacks were approved in early February. The estimated cost of the project was \$15,000 and the actual work got under way in January 1963.¹

Before the Reference Department was relocated, the Order Department made an inventory of its holdings. This, Crum said, was big news, since it was probably the first inventory that the Halamazoo Public Library had ever had.²

The most undesirable feature of this relocation was the moving of many of the book stacks into the large reading room. This room, as has already been mentioned, had always presented a pleasing and colorful aspect to the passerby on South Street. Now the

east side of this area was filled with book stacks, which certainly did not make for an attractive view. The space that had been previously occupied by these stacks was now used by the Reference Department, and the Young Adult Service was moved to the room formerly occupied by the Technical Processing Department.

This relocation provided the room greatly needed by this department, but by 1967 the Order and Catalog Departments were again working under crowded conditions. The growth in school libraries, the influx of materials purchased by federal funds, and the complete cataloging given to the materials acquired by these libraries required more personnel and equipment. In the fall of 1967, money became available to relocate the Catalog Department in part of the space vacated by the School Library Department. This move made it possible for the Order Department to spread into the area relinquished by cataloging. Although the former department did not seem crowded in the fall of 1972, cataloging again seemed to be suffering from congested conditions. There are now fifteen or more persons in technical services, which comprises four departments--Mending, Book Preparation, Order and Catalog.

Although the Library had had an unwritten book selection policy for many years, there had never been a formal statement. Through the years there have been patrons who have objected to books selected for the Library and staff members who were called upon to defend ~~the~~ ^{its} book selection policies believed that a written statement would be helpful to them. In April 1961, then, work on the compilation of a formal policy was begun under the leadership of Lillian Anderson, circulation librarian.³

The project required study of the book selection principles and practices evolved by the American library profession and the

formulation of the acquisition objectives of the Kalamazoo Library System. The librarians who wrote the policy studied the book selection practices of many libraries and the traditions of the Kalamazoo Public Library itself. The policy as written embodied the principles of the "Library Bill of Rights" and the "Freedom to Read" statement. Its preliminary drafts, "were carefully studied by all the professional librarians of the staff," and toward the end of 1962, most of them expressed themselves as being well satisfied with the result. On February 4, 1963, the Library director prrsented the "Selection Policy for Library Books and Materials" to the Board of Education for its first reading.

In his presentation Crum stated that this policy

was of immediate usefulness as a guide to the staff in the conduct of book selection meetings, to the director as a guide in budgeting, to the Board as a means of control over the development of the library's collections, and to the community as an explanation of sound criteria applied to book selection and of the knowledge and integrity brought to the book selection process by the members of the professional staff.

The Board approved the policy, at the same time also endorsing the "Library Bill of Rights" and the "Freedom to Read" statement.⁴²

Although this manual did not solve all book selection problems, it did give the librarians who had to deal with critics something tangible and concrete to present to them. There were occasional instances when critics insisted that the selection policies were too permissive, or should permit the acceptance of books that they advocated.

Shortly after the adoption of the policy a dissident appeared at a meeting of the Board to protest the rejection of a book that he had offered to the Library. The Board asked the director to look into the matter and the man was invited to attend the next meeting of the Book Selection Committee. He was present at that

meeting and proceeded to read one of the more lurid passages from The Last Temptation of Christ, by Nikos Kazantzakes. He then questioned the judgment of a group that would approve such an objectionable book and yet reject the work that he had offered to donate. ~~to the library~~. The chairman of the Book Selection Committee accepted the book on the condition that the history specialists on the committee would check it out and if the Library did not have material that presented the same point of view, his gift, he was assured, would be accepted. It was not accepted, however, because it was concluded after some study that its position was better and more competently treated in materials that were already in the Library.

The adoption of a book selection manual failed to solve all of the problems that the committee ~~itself~~ had to consider. Occasionally that body itself had difficulty in interpreting the policy or in applying it to a specific title, since there were differences of opinion in ~~its~~ elucidating its meaning. But the manual, which was recently revised, was and remains a significant achievement.

The first annual Autumn Book Festival in observance of National Book Week was held during the first week of November 1959. It was sponsored by the Friends of the Library and almost all of the book dealers in Kalamazoo cooperated to make it a "sound success." Although the sponsors had hoped that the attendance would be larger, still more than 1,900 persons took advantage of the opportunity to look at the new books available to the Kalamazoo reader.⁵ This event was discontinued a number of years ago.

The observance of National Library Week is another annual

event in the Kalamazoo Library System. The 1971 festival, which seems to have been an outstanding one, was held during the week of April 18 to 24. Displays, demonstrations and concerts were presented at the Main Library under the title "What You Don't Know Won't Hurt You! Maybe," which it was hoped would make the public aware of the variety of services the Library had to offer. As Mrs. Hannah Natzke, a reference librarian, put it:

We also want to get out in the streets and shopping areas during festival week, register people for library cards and invite them to feel free to come down and see what we do and what we have.

The bookmobile made extra registration stops in different locations for two-hour periods, so that people in the Kalamazoo School District and Kalamazoo County would be able to obtain library cards. The week also spelled good news for borrowers with overdue materials, with the exception of items from the Audio- Visual Department; for they were granted amnesty.

Featured during the weeks were such attractions as the Kalamazoo International Pipe Band and the Bullard Highland Dancers, a demonstration of fly-tying, crafts displays, camping and hiking equipment, the Western Michigan University Faculty Brass Quintet, and Old Time Films, featuring Charlie Chaplin, W. C. Fields and other movie favorites. There were also demonstrations of counted thread embroidery, needlepoint, weaving, oil painting and Afro-American jewelry making. Each of the events scheduled was accompanied by a display of books and other materials and a bibliography of books on the subject. Then there were displays of books and other materials on local history, the war in Southeast Asia, and urban affairs, a collection that had been purchased the previous year with funds provided by a federal grant to the Library.⁶

~~Soon after he came to Kalamazoo, Mark Crum had concluded that~~

For nearly fifteen years the film program sponsored by the Public Library had been a popular activity. Then in the fall of 1962, as a result of the efforts of Grant Wilcox, head of the Audio-Visual Department, the Kalamazoo Gazette joined the Library in sponsoring these programs. Now it became necessary to schedule two and later three showings of the films; yet it was often difficult to find a seat during the evening show. The first program of the season under the joint sponsorship was attended by 574 persons--167 for the afternoon showing and 407 for the evening one; this in an auditorium whose capacity was 370.⁷

Soon after he came to Kalamazoo, Mark Crum had concluded that the salaries of Library and Museum personnel were inequitable, when compared to those of the ten-month employees. Until the 1962/63 budget was established, the twelve-month librarian, whose work year was 22 per cent longer than that of the ten-month librarian, was on the same salary schedule as the latter. For a number of years, however, the Board was unwilling to correct this inequity, but in establishing the 1962/63 budget, it approved an appropriation for its partial correction. Perhaps even more important than the appropriation was the recognition that an inequity existed. Still the Board did not see its way clear to make this adjustment in one step, rather looking forward to a three-step schedule, with a first step of six per cent. In June 1963 the second step of this salary adjustment was approved, but since then the Board has not deemed it advisable or politic to approve the third step. It should be noted in concluding this discussion that most and perhaps all of the ten-month librarians were in the school libraries. They worked 192 days a year, while the twelve-month librarians worked 235 days.⁸

II

During the early 1960's a strong impetus was given to the establishing and strengthening of ~~the~~ school libraries. As was mentioned above, the Board of Education, on August 1, 1955, had adopted the policy of establishing a library, with a librarian on duty five days a week, in each elementary school with an enrollment of five hundred or more. But in schools of less than five hundred enrollment, one librarian would be permitted to supervise two school libraries, each one open two and a half days a week. Then in October 1959, the Board authorized funds for the purchase of an initial book stock for seven elementary school libraries. This was a good beginning toward the implementation of the Board's 1955 policy, but in the following May Crum noted that for financial reasons it would be impossible to begin new school libraries that year.

Nevertheless, progress continued to be made in the establishment of new school libraries and in the improvement of service. When the Library was moved into the new building in the spring of 1959, there were one senior high school library, four junior high school libraries and two elementary and junior high school library combinations; these were Lincoln and Milwood. The elementary schools had collections administered by the Director of Work with Children. These were known as book stations and consisted of a collection of books, with space provided for them; they were served by a school library clerk and were open from a day and a half to two and a half days a week. In 1960/61 there were two elementary school libraries and sixteen book stations; four years later, three elementary school libraries and twenty-six book stations.⁹

The organization of a school library department was a step that gave greater strength to the school library program. In the

new building the Boys and Girls Department found its work so heavy that the Director of Work with Children did not have time to care adequately for the school station collections under her administration. Thus it soon became evident that if the school libraries were to achieve the goals set by the school board on August 1, 1955, it was imperative to have a qualified school librarian to direct the program. On September 21, 1959, Crum's recommendation that Viola K. Fitch be appointed head of a school library department was approved by the Board, effective December 1.

Miss Fitch was well qualified for the position of director of the School Library Department, the name of her position was later changed to Supervisor of School Library Service. During her library career she had been in charge of the library of Central High School in Pontiac, Michigan, and previous to that had been a children's librarian, a junior high school librarian, a supervisor of work with children and a teacher of library service. She arrived in Kalamazoo on December 2 and during the month visited all of the school libraries and most of the school stations and also had discussion interviews with top school personnel. In May 1960 the school stations were transferred from the jurisdiction of the children's department of the Library to the school library department.¹⁰

The school libraries of the Kalamazoo School System owe much to Viola Fitch. She knew what constituted good school library service and began immediately to secure cooperation and understanding^{between} school personnel and library administration. She brought order and system to the administration of the school libraries and achieved a fair degree of uniformity in their organization and management. The position that she filled demanded a strong and positive personality, and although her decisions did not always please those who were affected by them, she laid a strong foundation for a sound

and progressive school library service.

By early 1960 the construction of a new senior high school was well under way. The school was named for the late Dr. Loy Norrix, who had been superintendent of the school system for many years. In February \$10,000 was allocated for the purchase of books for the new school, but it was realized that \$16,000 more was needed to provide for an initial book stock of 8,400 volumes. The selection and cataloging of these books was a special project. Since the heads of the Order and Cataloging Departments of the Public Library were deluged with work, it was impossible for them to assume responsibility for the project, or even to provide much supervision, ~~for it~~. The librarians who headed up the work were inexperienced and much of their work had to be corrected later. After this experience it became evident that special projects, even if there was a great need for them, were not entirely practical if proper supervision was unavailable. Yet it must be conceded that when Loy Norrix opened its doors in the fall of 1960, it had an organized library, which it would not have had but for the special project.¹¹

By the mid sixties the trend was away from book-oriented school libraries to materials-centered facilities. Formerly only books had been cataloged, but as the concept of an instructional-materials center developed, all the materials in a school library--books, filmstrips, films, kits of various kinds, realia, recordings and transparencies were processed. The first step in the plan to process all school library materials was the cataloging of filmstrips for the Northeastern Junior High School library in the summer of 1963. Card catalogs for the books in the school stations were begun in the summer of 1960.¹²

For years the problem of the administration of the school libraries within the school district had been troublesome. Although the Public Library itself had begun as a school district library, and though the high school had had some sort of library from its earliest days, school libraries began to fade from view after 1878, when it seems that the Central High School library was discontinued. In 1913 it was reestablished and operated as a school library until 1924 when it passed under the jurisdiction of the Public Library. During the decade of the teens, a number of school stations were organized as a result of the interest and work of Ethel Young. Then in the early 1920's, branch libraries were begun at the Lincoln and West Main schools. The libraries at these two schools and the one at Central High School and four or five book stations were the only school libraries in the district and all of them were under the jurisdiction of the Public Library.

These schools, as well as the other schools in the district, utilized its materials and services, ~~of the Public Library~~. No new school libraries were organized until the early 1950's, when these facilities were incorporated into the two junior high schools--Northeastern and South. When the Milwood area was annexed, the library, which was both an elementary and a junior high school library, was also operated by the Public Library.

It is true, however, that both Loy Norrix and Thomas Bowman, as superintendent of schools, felt that the school libraries should be part of the school administration. Bowman, believing that the superintendent of schools was responsible for the total school program, expressed himself emphatically on this point; his successor, Richard Percy, did not express a public opinion and seems to have been willing to work under the existing framework.

The librarians of Kalamazoo, though, were strongly opposed to a change in administration. They emphasized the fact that both the Public Library and the school libraries had made great progress under the leadership of the director of libraries and they saw no reason to change. There were, however, pressures that foretold a change. When in 1965, the school library supervisor applied for a Knapp Foundation grant, the application was denied and one of the reasons given for its rejection was that the school libraries were not under the school administration.

Another problem that had long disturbed both the public librarians and the Board of Education was the inability of its members to devote sufficient time to Library problems, because the library system was so much smaller than the school system. Although little was said about it, it probably was true that some of the Board members ~~have~~ wished through the years that the Public Library was not their responsibility. And others have been sincerely concerned that they did not have the time to give proper consideration to the needs of the library system.

Finally, on November 15, 1965, these criticisms and feelings of concern came to a head and the Board of Education passed a resolution that

A non-board member citizens' committee be formed to study present relationships between the public library and museum services offered through the Kalamazoo School District and similar services offered through other governmental units in Kalamazoo County.

In addition, study and evaluate the organizational relationships between the board of education, superintendent, and director of library services in offering school and public library and museum services through a school district.

Whereupon a committee of five prominent Kalamazoo citizens under the chairmanship of D. Gordon Knapp, a former member of the school board, was appointed by the president of the Board, John

Milroy.

During succeeding months this committee met with the director of libraries, superintendent of schools, supervisor of school library service, a representative of the Michigan State Library, the chairman of the Kalamazoo County Library Board and representatives from the Citizens for Educational Freedom.

On June 8, 1966, the committee made its report, in which were the following four recommendations:

1. That the school library function and budget should be the responsibility of the superintendent of schools.
2. That the Kalamazoo School Board appoint a Citizens Library Council to be composed of approximately seven persons who have an interest in and some knowledge of the Kalamazoo Public Library-Museum.
3. That a program of development and enlargement of the Kalamazoo Library System be adopted to provide every resident of the Kalamazoo area with at least a minimum of library service according to State Library standards.
4. That efforts be made to improve the school library program by providing additional funds for staff, books, and library space.

The report also noted that the committee had

devoted considerable attention to the question of where the Director of Libraries should report and also where the school libraries should report. We have concluded that the Director of Libraries should continue to report directly to the Board of Education. We feel that the school libraries can best perform their function if they are the responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools.

The Library Study Committee gave the following reasons for having reached these conclusions:

1. The operation of the Public Library and Museum serve different objectives and present different problems from those involved in the operation of the school libraries.
2. School libraries are an integral part of the educational process and therefore should be part of the direct responsibility of the Superintendent of Schools.
3. The training and orientation of school librarians is different from the training and orientation of librarians working in public libraries.
4. There is a trend for school libraries to become resource centers for both teachers and students rather than just collections of books. As resource centers, the school libraries should have the closest possible relationship with the individuals who plan the curriculum as well as with

school administrators and classroom teachers.¹³

It was also noted that the staff of the Public Library provided important services to the school libraries, principally in the acquisition, processing and cataloging of books and that it would seem advisable for the ~~Public~~ Library to continue to provide these services for the school libraries on a "contract basis with appropriate cost allocation."

On June 27 the Board of Education approved three of these recommendations, but the one suggesting the establishment of a Citizen Library Council was tabled by a vote of five to two. Dr. Marvin DeBoer, one of its members, strongly opposed the entire report of the study committee.

In stating his objections to the first recommendation, DeBoer said that in turning the school libraries over to the superintendent of schools

we are not accomplishing anything except a transfer of responsibility. If our school libraries are inadequate, are they because of the present administrative arrangement or because of a lack of funds? Are our problems structural or financial?

He also voted against the next two recommendations because he felt that they were simply restatements of what the school board was already committed to do. He also made the statement that he was disappointed in the report because it contained no criticism or analysis of present operations.¹⁴

After the study committee had made its report, Director of Libraries Mark Crum discussed its recommendations and their implications with the Library staff and primarily with the department heads group. Most of the members of this group could see no great advantage in placing the school libraries under the superintendent of schools, but they were agreed that this step

was inevitable and advised the director to accept the study committee's recommendation as gracefully as possible.

At its June 27 meeting, Crum made a statement to the Board of Education in which he noted that this was a historic day for the library system, and that a change in the organizational structure of library service and government was being considered, even though the system had grown to its present dimensions under this structure and government. He also expressed the opinion that there was nothing in the present organizational arrangement that would prevent or even handicap "willing participants or position holders from making it work well. The limiting factor," he went on to say, "is not an inherently bad organizational structure but it is unwillingness, for whatever reason, to provide for a flourishing library service."

"The crucial aspect of this report," he continued, "and the recommendations which it makes obviously is its follow-through." Then he questioned, "Will the transfer of the jurisdiction of the school libraries to the Superintendent of Schools and the appointment of a Citizens Library Council actually result in more and better library services to students, teachers, and the public at large?"

Crum, of course, was concerned, as were many other librarians in the city and on the Public Library staff, that after a unified system had been divided the ~~Public~~ Public Library would be allowed to decline or even to stop growing. As he put it so aptly:

That is why I point out to you today that I do not want to take steps here today which can be seen historically as a move on the part of the School Administration, Library Administration, and Board of Education to seat school libraries at the supper table and public libraries on a seat in the corner; or even worse, to relegate both to a corner.

He also expressed the fear that after the library system had

been divided,

we 'conquer' each part instead of encouraging each part to flourish... We must watch that we do not plant one half (the school libraries) where it will be shaded by other plants in the gardener's care; and watch that we do not put the other half (public libraries) where the soil is thin and beyond the reach of the hose.

After having made these observations, Crum said that he accepted the report of the Library Study Committee and recommended its adoption in principle.*15

The immediate effect of the Board's acceptance of the study committee's recommendations was the moving of the School Libraries Department from the Public Library ~~building~~ to the school administration building. This was regretted by many members of the staff, both public and school librarians. For many years they had thought of themselves as members of one large family; this feeling of unity had been enforced by the attendance of all the staff at the monthly staff meetings, the Christmas tea and the spring breakfast. Although few of the school librarians made any statements, one or two of them made it clear that they would have preferred continuing to work under the Director of Libraries.

Actually the transfer of the school libraries to the jurisdiction of the superintendent of schools made little difference to the Public Library. The Technical Processing departments, which had processed the books and other materials for the school libraries, continued to do so. The difference was one of administration: now the school administration contracted ~~with the Public Library~~ for this work to be done.

* Six years earlier Crum had considered the feasibility of placing the school libraries under the superintendent of schools. At that time he said: "For example, after adequate provision for support of the public library had been accomplished, and after a frank examination of the disadvantages as well as the advantages of separate school and public library systems had been made, it might be considered best to separate the two and place the school libraries under the administrative control of the superintendent of schools." 16

What can be said in retrospect of the significance of the transfer of the school libraries from the administration of the Public Library to that of the school system?

School library service has not improved materially during the six years that have elapsed since the transfer. In the high schools especially, it made little difference; little was gained or lost. Although personal ties with public librarians were severed, school librarians are now closer to the people they work with. It should also be emphasized that centralized processing by the Technical Processing departments greatly eased the transition.

Two constructive developments should be noted. The lobby library concept that was incorporated into the elementary schools that were built in the late 1950's and early 1960's, while never formally repudiated by the school administration, is now seen as being entirely inadequate. On the secondary level, the school administration has planned for adequate library or instructional materials center facilities in the remodeled Loy Norrix High School and the new Central High School.* In these high schools the library is fully developed and properly located to play its proper role in the educational process. This significant improvement in secondary school library facilities might not have been achieved if the school administrators had still been in the position of resisting or opposing the recommendations and suggestions of the director of libraries in his championing of good school libraries.

Administratively speaking, the transfer of these libraries to the school administration may have been a loss, at least for

* The new Central High School will be described more fully later in this chapter.

the first few years. The supervisor of school library service did not have line responsibility, but was under the direction of the director of curriculum and made her recommendations and budget requests through his office to the superintendent of schools. Recently, however, school libraries and all audio-visual services were combined in one position, and the Supervisor of School Library Service is now the Coordinator of Instructional Media, which has augmented her authority and influence.

Finally, it must be concluded that neither the library system nor the school libraries were drastically affected by this change. Both institutions have continued to suffer from lack of adequate funds which would have enabled them to develop library facilities and services that would meet present-day demands and situations.

The passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in 1965 was a development that had a tremendous impact on the growth and improvement of school libraries. During the first year that this law was in force, the school libraries of the Kalamazoo School District were allotted over \$60,000 for the purchase of books and other library materials. Much of the money was used to buy various types of audio-visual materials, such as filmstrips, recordings, transparencies and kits.

The ordering of these items, which were to be paid for by Title I and II funds, placed a heavy burden upon the Order Department of the library system. The School Libraries Department, was unable, for a number of reasons, to get its orders in on time and consequently the month of June, for these funds had to be encumbered by June 30, was a hectic one. In July 1966, 1005 volumes, purchased from regular funds, were received by the Public

Library, and only 378 of these were for the school libraries. At the same time, however, the receipts of materials purchased with federal funds totaled 3,789 items.

During the month of August the Cataloging Department ~~of the library system~~ processed 2,928 books, of which 1,861 were for the schools; many of these were duplicate copies, for there were only forty-two new titles in the school books. In November 1,024 volumes were cataloged for the Public Library and 1,590 for the school libraries. At the same time 290 audio-visual items were done for these libraries, but only twenty-one for the public services. These statistics will serve to indicate the amount of materials being acquired by the school libraries as the result of several federal acts. And the flow of federal monies continues. During the 1971/72 fiscal year, \$35,000 was regularly budgeted for school library materials and another \$35,000 was made available from Title II funds.¹⁷

Probably the most spectacular development in the Kalamazoo School District in recent years was the construction of a new senior high school, completely modern in design and execution. The new school is located in the northwestern part of the school district, on Drake Road, near where Benjamin Drake began farming 140 years ago; it opened its doors on January 31, 1972.

In 1967 a proposal to build a new high school and to remodel Loy Norrix was defeated at the polls. In December 1968, however, the Board of Education approved a \$12.3 million bond issue, the money to be borrowed under a State law which permits school districts to borrow up to five per cent of the district's valuation without a vote of the people. This action triggered a bitter dispute during which an attempt was made to recall the then-

current Board of Education. Of this bond issue, \$3.7 million was used to finance the remodeling of and the building of an addition to Loy Norrix High School. This work was completed in time for the opening of school in 1971 and brought the capacity of the school to 2,200 students.

The new high school, which was named after the old Central High School on Vine and Westnedge Streets, is made up of four diamond shaped "pods" in a flying wedge formation on the side of a hill. The school covers an area of 303,000 square feet, as compared to the 220,000 of the old building. The three-story academic pod at the front point of the wedge contains most of the academic classrooms, administrative offices, business education classrooms and a two-story media center (library). This center was described by the architect and school officials as "the hub" of the instructional services to be provided by the school. It is a giant media center containing books, reference materials, study provisions, a reading improvement area and other facilities.

The latter include drafting classrooms, an electronics room, shops for graphic arts, carpentry, welding, and machine and auto repair. There are also provisions for a new occupational training program, which includes a daycare center for instructing girls in child care and an auto service facility to train boys to be gas station operators. The two-story physical education unit contains a gymnasium seating 3,000 spectators and a 300-seat Olympic-size swimming pool. There is also a 5,500-seat football stadium and an eight-lane all-weather track.

If an innovative plant and progressive instructional methods, incorporating modern educational concepts, will insure quality education, then the young people of Kalamazoo will be offered

~~of~~ the kind of training that will enable them to cope better with the complexities and demands of modern life.¹⁸

Old Central High, portions of which date to 1913 and the rest of it to 1923, occupies a site that saw Kalamazoo's first consolidated school, Old Union. The building will not be razed. Its auditorium, which was renovated in 1960 with the help of a \$200,000 grant from the Kalamazoo Foundation, will still be used, and the other areas of the building may be used for adult classes, the Continuing Education Center and other uses that are still under study.

III

For several years the relationships between the Library, school administration and the public had been cordial. An interruption in this cordiality came about when it was decided to terminate bookmobile service to most of the schools in the Kalamazoo area. In September 1961, sixteen schools, including four parochial schools, were on the bookmobile schedule. Then on June 29, 1964, Director of Libraries Mark Crum recommended that bookmobile service to all schools be discontinued as of the close of the 1963/64 school year, because the public schools which had been served by the bookmobile were to be given book stations, with eventual conversion to school libraries. The Board of Education approved Crum's recommendation, but two of its members voted against this action and one member abstained.¹⁹

The parochial schools were then notified that they would no longer be provided with bookmobile service. Since most of them ~~schools~~ had depended on the bookmobile and consequently had failed to build up their own libraries, the prospect of losing this service upset them greatly, and opposition soon began to develop against the Board's action. By the beginning of September, the

Board was beginning to receive many letters questioning the discontinuance of bookmobile service to the parochial schools, and much discussion ensued in its meetings regarding the advisability of its action. Some of the members were concerned over the adverse effect it might have on future millage votes. The letters and discussions continued until March 1965, when the Library administration was instructed to have the bookmobile begin making public stops on the grounds of the parochial schools. Although these stops were popular, they were patronized almost entirely by school children, teachers and parents.²⁰

These stops were patently a fiction for service to these schools. The resumption of bookmobile service was enthusiastically applauded by many, though there were some who felt that this step was inconsistent. The Board's policy, however, was pragmatic rather than consistent, for most of its members believed that good public relations with the community demanded this concession to the parochial schools.

IV

As the circulation of books and other materials continued to grow in the Kalamazoo Library System the slipping of books, a routine connected with the charging machine being used, became more and more onerous. A faster method of charging books seemed to be indicated and Lillian Anderson, head of the Circulation Department, made a careful study of other charging systems. After she had completed her research, a number of librarians visited other libraries in the area to check out the advantages and disadvantages of the two favored methods: Regiscope and Wayne County. A number of librarians felt that the latter, since it required patrons to fill out charging slips, would be unpopular, but after checking

with libraries using it, they withdrew their objections. The chief advantage of the Wayne County charging system was that there were no machines to break down or get out of order.

In May 1964 Crum recommended to the Board of Education that it approve the change to a self-charging transaction system on or about June 29. His recommendation was approved on June 1.

Although it had been accepted by the patrons of other libraries, the self-charging procedure proved to be extremely unpopular in Kalamazoo. Many of the Library patrons objected strenuously and even offensively to their being asked to write their names, addresses and the authors and titles of the books they were planning to borrow on the check-out-slips. By July 20, 1964, book circulation was down eight per cent in the main library and fifteen to twenty per cent on the bookmobile over the comparable period of the preceding year. During September there was a loss of 2,157 volumes.

On September 8, 1964, the Board approved a changeover to a photographic charging system. The patrons of the library system were very pleased with the adoption of the Regiscope-Rapidex system, and July 1965 was the first month since the discontinuance of the old method in June 1964 that the circulation showed a gain over the corresponding month of the previous year. Although the Regiscope-Rapidex procedure was well accepted, the machines themselves required considerable service and attention. In order to service them properly, the building engineer was sent to Chicago for a workshop on their maintenance and he was then able to provide most of the necessary care and repair.²¹

V

During its 1965/66 session, the Michigan Legislature passed

a law permitting public employees to negotiate salaries, working conditions and other problems. This meant that the teachers in the Kalamazoo school system had the right to enter into professional negotiations with the Board of Education, which formally recognized the Kalamazoo City Education Association (KCEA) as the bargaining group and negotiations began. Since the professional members of the Library staff were also employees of the school system and many were members of KCEA, they authorized it to include them in its bargaining with school board. All personnel, however, having supervisory status, including the department heads of the Library, were excluded from representation by KCEA.

Another group that negotiated with the Board was the clerical and secretarial association-KAES.* Its negotiations were completed in August. Besides salary schedules, the agreement provided for a 38- and 40-hour work week. For years the school clerks and secretaries had worked a 40-hour week, while those of the library system had worked thirty-eight hours. But the school employees were allowed a 15-minute relief period (commonly called a coffee break) during the morning and afternoon. The Director of Libraries, though, was reluctant to grant regularly-scheduled coffee breaks to Library personnel since their work week was two hours shorter than that of the clerical and secretarial staffs of the schools. The agreement between KAES and the Board, however, provided for a 15-minute morning and afternoon relief period.

The Library clerical personnel were^how required to choose between a 38-hour and 40-hour week. Most of them chose the latter, only three of them opting for the 38-hour week with its corresponding loss of salary. Since they had been permitted to work this kind of week during their entire period of service at the Library

* Now KAEOE: Kalamazoo Association of Educational Office Employees.

with no loss of pay, this arrangement seemed unfair to them, and one or two of those who had elected to work the 38-hour week were resentful.²²

Though none of the members of the staff expressed any sympathy for strikes, no one knew what would happen if negotiations between the Board of Education and KCEA reached an impasse at some future date and a strike was called. The Library workers recognized the possibility of such an eventuality, but also hoped that it would not happen. But four years later KCEA called a strike against the Board and eighteen of the thirty-two staff members of the Library system walked out with more than nine hundred public school teachers.

The main issue of the strike seemed to be planning time for elementary teachers, though class size and salaries entered into the picture. Many of the participants in the strike felt that the Board was unreasonably obdurate and that community support of their cause was good. But there were those in the community who thought that KCEA had shabbily disguised its mercenary demands under the guise of quality education, class size and planning time. Regardless of what the real issue was, it can hardly be denied that the salary schedules negotiated were good. The beginning salary for a teacher with a bachelor's degree was set at \$8,000, with a maximum of \$13,120 in twelve steps, and that for a teacher with a master's degree, the beginning salary was \$8,640, with a maximum of \$14,800 in fourteen steps. The teachers' strike occurred during September 1970 and lasted for approximately twelve days.

Library employees had no alternative but to join the teachers in striking; for them it was a matter of survival in the organization. During the duration of the strike, department heads and

other workers manned the Library posts usually filled by those out on strike, but there was a slowdown in services. For example, the Reference Department had to stop giving service by mail and such work as book selection and clipping of newspapers began to pile up. All seemed to be relieved when the difficulty was settled and there was no significant deterioration of Library morale. Those who took part in the strike felt that the teachers now accorded them greater respect than previously, and that perhaps it was worth it, even though they lost all twelve days, while the teachers were permitted to make up six of the days lost.²³

Two years later the situation has steadied. The achievements of the teachers' association have been considerable, and the organization seems more mature and not so belligerent. As a result of KCEA's negotiations, teachers can no longer claim that they are relatively underpaid. Another development that may have aided in securing stability was the hiring of competent legal counsel by the Board of Education to assist in collective bargaining. One can hope that in the near future a way can be found of reconciling disputes between employees and management without expensive and demoralizing strikes..

VI

As director of the Kalamazoo Library System, Mark Crum had, on occasion, pointed out to the Board the weaknesses of the system and the need for more financial support, more materials, and more personnel. To most of its members, however, the Library seemed entirely adequate to meet the needs of the community. Then, in early 1966, the Board, at the request of some of its members, instructed Crum to prepare material that would provide them with Library background information. This was a big assignment and took the director

many months to prepare. Sections 1 and 2 of the report were completed in November 1966.

Section 1 gave a brief history of the various departments of the Library and a run-down of their activities; this material had been prepared by the heads of the departments. Section 2 discussed the measurements of library service--population served, number of agencies, gains in registered borrowers, circulation per capita, circulation per borrower, reference questions asked, books received and cataloged, expenditures per capita, staff size and other factors. It also included pertinent Library statistics for the period of 1956/57 to 1965/66.

During this period, the population served by the library system increased from 88,112 to 103,644. At the same time, the circulation of library materials grew from 845,184 to 1,412,246 and per borrower from 29.9 to 41.0 items. The number of reference questions answered did not show as significant an increase--18,181 to 22,413, but the number of reader' advisory questions had grown from 17,923 to 29,404. It is likely that some of these had previously been answered by the Reference Department.²⁴

Unfortunately, the number of books received and processed did not show a corresponding increase. In 1956/57 the number of books acquired totaled 32,201, the annexation of Milwood being largely responsible for this total; two years later the number of acquisitions had dropped to 17,154, rising to 43,009 the following year, and then dropping to 31,112 in 1960/61. The ten-year average was 28,280, and during this period the library system's book stock grew from 178,585 to 357,099 volumes, but much of the growth was to be found in the holdings of the school libraries.

While the amount spent for library materials increased from

\$32,202 to \$68,547, the amount allocated for salaries, from \$201,877 to \$528,038. The total Library budget in 1956/57 was \$299,875 and in 1965/66, \$740,791, or 5.67 per cent and 7.32 per cent of the total school system respectively. The budget for the year 1972/73 shows a dramatic increase over even the latter figure: \$1,170,994, or slightly more than 5.0 per cent of a total school system budget of over \$21,000,000. In this budget over \$766,000 has been set aside for salaries and \$112,000 for library materials, \$92,000 being for books. This will enable the Public Library to acquire some of the publications that have long been needed.²⁵

During the ten-year period of 1956/57 to 1965/66, the library system and the work done in it showed a remarkable growth as a brief summary of the report of the Cataloging Department for the years 1957/58 to 1966/67 may serve to indicate. In 1957 there were eleven libraries in the Kalamazoo Library System, nine of which received full cataloging; ten years later there were fifty libraries, forty-eight of which were given complete cataloging. At the beginning of this period there were one senior high school library, two junior high and two combined junior high and elementary school libraries, and nine school stations administered by the Boys and Girls Department; ten years later there were two senior high school libraries, five junior high and twenty-nine elementary school libraries administered by a supervisor of school library service, whose department also had a library. It should be reiterated, however, that the school libraries were transferred from the administration of the library system to that of the school system in 1966, but the work of ordering and processing their materials was still being done by the Technical Processing departments of the Library.

At the beginning of this period, the Cataloging Department

had no official catalog; the holdings of all of the school libraries and stations were recorded on one shelf list; the personnel of the department consisted of one full-time cataloger and one part-time clerk-typist (For a number of weeks the cataloger, in order to get some books out of his department, did his own typing; when Olive Duffy, order librarian and head of the Technical Processing Department arrived, she assisted him with the typing, and being a good typist, she was able to move the books out of the department in greater numbers.); the Order Department consisted of one librarian and her clerk and there were two workers in the mending and book processing department. Ten years later the official catalog filled 118 trays; the shelf lists of the school libraries required five cards per title; there were two full-time catalogers and three and a half clerk -typists in the Cataloging Department; one librarian and three clerks in the Order Department; and five persons in the Mending and Processing Department. And it must be said that none of these departments felt themselves overstaffed.

During this ten-year period, 291,478 books and 5,569 non-book materials, mostly recordings, were processed and 43,144 new titles were added to the collection.

Beginning with the fall of 1966, as was mentioned earlier, the influx of materials for the school libraries began to make itself felt. During the four-year period of 1966/67 to 1970/71, 147,903 items were processed by the Cataloging Department and 75,000 of these were for the school libraries. The library system added 1,493 audio-visual items to its collection, the school libraries, 6,116 to theirs during this period. These figures would have been even more disproportionate if the same level of federal government support had been available during the final

year that there had been during the first three years of the period. In the fall of 1972, however, the Order and Cataloging Departments again had a sizable backlog to work off.²⁶

Now to return to Crum's "Library Background Information."

Having completed the statistics for the 1956 to 1966 period, he proceeded to compare the Kalamazoo Library System with Public Library Service: A Guide to Evaluation with Minimum Standards, Michigan Standards for Public Library Systems and other evaluating guides. The strengths of the system, as he saw it, can be summarized briefly as follows:

1. The main library is conveniently located and has an ideal location.
2. The Library has a first-rate physical plant and the proper tools and equipment.
3. The standards call for 4,000 to 5,000 separate titles to be added to the collection annually. The Library probably exceeded this number by 2,000 to 3,000 titles during the years of 1963/64 to 1966/67.
4. The Kalamazoo Library System is organized to include services to children from infancy through approximately thirteen years, and the full service of the children's staffs and areas is available to all children and adults, as individuals and groups.

The outstanding weaknesses of the system were:

1. Collections are not as broad as desirable and there is a lack of duplicate copies.
2. Films and recordings furnished on a severely limited basis and a fee charged for recordings.
3. Library is in close touch with that portion of its constituency which uses the library, but weak as an organization in maintaining contact with the nonlibrary using segment of the community because sufficient staff is lacking.
4. Serious shortcomings in library's service schedule: skeletal reference service on Sundays, audio-visual department not open evenings, Boys and Girls department open only two evenings and Young Adult service closed one week day, evenings and Sundays.
5. Library system should be extended to include at least all of Kalamazoo County, who wish to participate and at most to the Kalamazoo Metropolitan District.
6. The library does not have "a well-organized program of in-service training." This is probably one of the library's most serious shortcomings and is the result of a lack of sufficient staff to meet the needs for operating personnel in line departments...²⁷

The Board accepted Crum's evaluation of the library system and his recommendations, but during the six years that have elapsed since he prepared this material, it has found itself unable or unwilling to do much to implement his suggestions. Its members found the price tag attached to Crum's report too formidable to consider seriously, and the Kalamazoo Library System, like most public libraries, has to be satisfied with something less than the ideal.

But, it should be pointed out, some progress has been made. For years Crum had been dissatisfied with the Library's policy of charging rental fees for framed pictures and recordings; he took the position that in a free public library it was illogical to charge fees for some materials. In 1967/68 he was able to institute the policy of making all library materials free to library card holders.

For many years the Library has been open Sunday afternoon, except during the summer months. At the beginning no service was given, but patrons had the opportunity to return books and to do some reading. Later they were permitted to charge books and still later limited reference service was made available. All of the services offered were very limited, since only one professional librarian was on duty, assisted by one or two student assistants. When the Library was moved into the new building, the problem of Sunday service became more serious; for it soon became obvious that one professional person was unable to cope with the demands placed upon him.

The Library staff disagreed as to what should be done. Several of its older members wanted to go back to the time when very limited service had been given. Some of the newer members, though, especially those who frequently worked on Sundays, and were aware of the

services demanded, asserted that if the Library were open on Sundays, then adequate service should be provided. The controversy continued for several years. Crum himself probably favored complete service, but the system's budget did not permit him to make this available.

Finally, during 1967/68, funds were at hand which made it possible to abolish all fees for library materials and to furnish fuller service on Sundays. Now the Children's, Circulation, Reference and Young Adult departments are each manned by a professional librarian on Sundays, except July and August and during periods when it has been necessary to curtail services because of financial crises.

Early in 1971 Dr. Crum* listed the five basic functions of or the five reasons for the library system's existence and briefly summed up its program. He stated that (1) It should contain information of all sorts; (2) It should serve as an educational center; (3) It should serve as a place for mental recreation; (4) It should be a resource for development of esthetic appreciation; and (5) It should contain enough material to allow any kind of research project appropriate to its size. "In other words," he concluded, "it should be able to provide materials to help human beings develop whatever directions they choose."

The Kalamazoo Public Library, its three branches, the book-mobile department and its extension service and inter-library

* Mark Crum was awarded the Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership degree in April 1970 by Western Michigan University. The title of his dissertation was "What Does the Public Library User Really Want?"

loan system, the Oshtemo library, its 300,000 books and other materials, ~~and the Museum~~ als, and the Museum department with its exhibits, scientific displays and artifacts from Kalamazoo's past should be regarded, Crum emphasized, as the information center of the community.

To service this system, he noted, required more than eighty full- and part-time employees, including two administrators, eleven department heads and branch library heads, seventeen librarians and staff members and three Museum professionals. Then there were forty-three part-time workers, many of them pages and shelf attendants, whose jobs were the equivalent of fourteen full-time people. The downtown library and its branches were maintained by eight custodians and two former public transit lines drivers drove and maintain^{ed} the two bookmobiles.²⁸

As the decade of the '70's began, the Kalamazoo Library System seemed to have the facilities and staff to provide reasonably good service, but a decline in the use of its materials could be noted. During the three-year period of 1967/68 to 1970/71, the total circulation of book materials varied from 605,325 to 569,186 and that of non-book from 154,360 to 107,414. The reasons for this decline seem to be obscure. It may be, since the system is serving a larger community, that the \$73,000 that has been spent in recent years for books and other library items does not provide the Library patron with the variety of materials that he requires. If a person has been disappointed a number of times in his attempts to secure the material he needs, he may be disinclined to return to the library. The Public Library has long needed more duplicate copies, but \$73,000 does not go far in purchasing new titles and at the same time furnish the funds for the extra copies of books that are in great demand. And it should also be realized that this amount bought about the same number of books in 1971 that \$40,000 or less

did fifteen years earlier. Perhaps the \$92,000 budgeted for books for 1972/73 will enable the Library to strengthen its collection, even though part of the increase will be offset by burgeoning book costs.

VII

Through the years the Museum has always been a popular division of the library system. Its director, Alexis Praus, and his assistants have endeavored continually to make its services and offerings more attractive.

In May 1961 the Museum shop, after much research, study and work on the part of Corwin Rife, Museum preparator, and Emmett Morlan, his assistant, finished the reconstruction of a pioneer log cabin and shop. The room was constructed from logs taken from the original Gen. William Rufus Shafter's cabin that had been built around 1835 near Galesburg and torn down in 1956, and Praus had had the foresight to save the logs. The pioneer room is an authentic reproduction of a pioneer home and has been viewed by many people. The exhibit is provided with a taped recording which tells the history of the cabin and describes the furnishings and tools in the room. In connection with the Pioneer Room, "Pioneer Techniques," such as flax spinning, wool carding and weaving are demonstrated by Ruth Howard, curator of the Museum.²⁹

Ten years later a tomb for the Museum's mummy was completed, after four and half years of research and work. The tomb is an accurate though composite reconstruction, and along the walk in its interior are numerous displays showing artifacts, baskets, animal and reptile mummys and a replica of the Rosetta Stone bearing inscriptions which ~~were~~ were used to crack the complex hieroglyphic codes. Most of the authentic cultural items on display were donated by

Donald O. Boudeman and A. M. Todd.³⁰

A visitor, representing the New York Public Library, was especially impressed by the Egyptian exhibit and said that she had never seen anything like it in New York, Boston or anywhere she had been before. She also remarked that the one in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York "does not allow the viewer to look in the way the one at the Kalamazoo Public Museum does."³¹

Indexing the Kalamazoo Gazette is a project being sponsored by the Museum. The Library has an almost complete file of the original newspaper, both on microfilm and hardcopy, starting with volume 3, no. 143, January 23, 1837, and continuing to April 6, 1946. All subsequent issues are on microfilm only. The Library also has copies of the newspaper that preceded the Gazette under the name of the Michigan Statesman and St. Joseph Chronicle, beginning with June 28, 1834 and ending October 15, 1836.

Valuable as these newspapers are, they are almost useless as a source of information without an index. Realizing this, Praus made several efforts to get funds to index the Gazette, but the project seemed overwhelming in terms of time and money to those whom he approached. An index, however, became feasible when he approached George Kropp, then warden of Southern Michigan Prison. Mr. Kropp told Praus that a Jaycee group had recently been formed at the prison and was looking for an activity that had community service aspects. This project has been supported by Kropp's successor, Perry M. Johnson, and other prison officials.

Under the direction of Ralph Hoffman, Assistant Supervisor of Special Activities, the Jaycees have worked and continue to work dilligently and productively. These men are able to work on the indexing only after their regular working hours and on Saturdays,

Sundays and holidays. They receive no monetary compensation, and engage in this and other projects as community service activities. The prison Jaycees chapter, however, receives a little over \$100 annually from the Kalamazoo Gazette Index Fund. If the men had been paid minimum wages, it has been estimated that the indexing of the Gazette would have cost over \$67,000.

The name and subject index for the decade of 1837-1847 has been completed and microfilmed, and that for the second decade was almost ready for key punching in the fall of 1972. The classified name index undoubtedly will prove of great value and benefit to the student and professional researcher as well as the family historian and genealogist.³²

During the past five years the circulation of the Museum's loan exhibits has declined; for 1971/72 the decrease amounted to 742 items. The expansion of audio-materials in the schools and the availability of imported goods in local stores are probably responsible for this decline.

The great needs of the Museum are additional space and help. The greatest hope for the future is a third floor addition to the building, but this is unlikely because of current financial stringencies. A more realistic plan is to convert the auditorium into a museum gallery, but this would require the giving up of the use of the auditorium as such and the expenditure of some \$75,000 for exhibit cases, electrical work and other needs. If this were done, the Exhibits Department would require added personnel. A person to assist Corwin Rife in research is presently much needed. There should also be more Museum programs for children, but the work load on Ruth Howard, Curator of Education, is at its maximum and no further continuing programs can be planned without additional help for her.³³

Although the Kalamazoo Public Museum is unable to accomplish all that its staff deems desirable, nevertheless it is a popular part of the library system and continues to serve the public of the school district in its own unique way.

IX

For years the Kalamazoo school and library systems have faced financial crises. As the cost of operating these systems has increased steadily, voters have become more and more reluctant to approve millage proposals. Between September 8, 1958 and June 12, 1972 there have been fifteen millage votes, nine of which were approved and six rejected. The crisis of 1971 was the most crucial, especially for the library system, of any of the past fourteen years.

In May of that year, the school administration set a tentative budget for the school and library system of \$17,990,722, of which amount \$1,048,030 was allocated for the Library and Museum. A ten-mill additional tax, it was determined, would be necessary to raise this amount. On June 14 a record number of voters, more than 20,000 of them, went to the polls to turn down this millage request. Of the total votes cast, 12,689 were against the proposal and 7,762 in favor of it, and it passed in only five of the twenty-one precincts.

Two main reasons were given for this decisive rejection of the additional millage. A taxpayer revolt was one of them and the other was resentment of the court order requiring the busing of school children in order to achieve racial balance in the schools. That the latter reason is a significant one is indicated by the landslide vote given to two Board of Education candidates who had pledged themselves to rescind or otherwise prevent the implementation of the elementary desegregation plan.³⁴

Early in August the school system budget was cut by \$591,000 and August 30 was set as the date for another millage try. Only 7.8 mills were to be requested. It was felt that the new budget would permit both schools and libraries to operate without requiring the discharge of employees and the direct cutting of educational programs, but it was understood that if the request for the millage would fail, both the library and school systems would face critical cutbacks. On August 30, however, the voters of the Kalamazoo School District rejected the 7.8-mill levy by a vote of 8,443 to 7,767. At the same time a three-judge panel for the Sixth U.S. Court of Appeals in Cincinnati was upholding a racial balance busing plan for Kalamazoo, which had been canceled in June when the make-up of the Board of Education had changed. And one of its ~~Board~~ members linked the court decision directly with the defeat of the millage.

After this defeat the Board ~~of Education~~ had no alternative but to approve huge budget cuts. Nearly \$3,500,000 were trimmed from a tentative budget of \$17.3 million. This cutback involved the elimination of 111 teaching positions and regular classtime instruction in art, music, debate, drama and physical education. It also meant shorter class days and a shortened school year.

For the Kalamazoo Library System this cut meant a \$201,450 retrenchment in its budget, and would entail the loss of seven and a half librarian and clerical positions, the cutting of weekly service from 73 to 55½ hours, possibly a 25-day shutdown of the Library, which would have saved \$80,250, a thirty per cent cut in library service, a \$50,000 cut in funds for books, materials and binding, elimination of the 16-mm film service and a reduction of funds for general supplies, equipment repairs, postage and other items. These budget cuts were to become effective October 1.³⁵

Then the acting superintendent of schools recommended the cutting off of funds for the operation of the Public Library and for extracurricular sports and field trip accounts. These further drastic steps seemed necessary because the Michigan Department of Education had ordered the restoration of the full 180-day year.³⁶

The elimination of 111 positions from the teaching force posed a most critical problem for the school administration. Many of these teachers were black and had been recruited at the expenditure of much time and money. Since the great majority of these teachers had been hired during the past two or three years, they had low seniority and therefore would be among the first to lose their positions. Of the 103 teachers and counselors who were "pink-slipped," twenty-six were black. In order to prevent this reduction in the number of black teachers, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People brought suit before ~~the~~ U.S. District Judge, Noel P. Fox, in Grand Rapids, and challenged the right of the Board of Education to dismiss these nontenure teachers.

In his opinion, delivered on October 7, 1971, Judge Fox declared that the discharging of teachers in the name of a financial crisis was constitutionally impermissible because of its invasion of the rights secured by the Fourteenth Amendment. In his opinion he noted that the recruitment effort which had brought the imperiled teachers to Kalamazoo had been a massive and expensive one, and that it had been the unanimous opinion of all who had testified that these dismissals would literally "tear the heart out of the desegregation plan."

Then he continued with a statement that deeply upset the users and supporters of the Public Library:

It is very clear that presently funds are available from the public library budget to maintain the 103 teachers and 35.5 library workers in the Kalamazoo school system. at least

through the first semester of this school year.

After ordering the Board of Education to cease and desist from the dismissal of any of the 103 teachers and counselors and the 35.4 school library assistants who had received "pink slips" on September 20, Fox concluded:

It is further ordered that the defendant Kalamazoo Board of Education obtain whatever additional funds are required to presently employ the above-designated employees from funds presently budgeted for the maintenance of general public access to the Kalamazoo Public Library.³⁷

All too often it seems that public libraries like the proverbial well of water that runs dry are not appreciated until they are in jeopardy or are closed. So it was in Kalamazoo when it seemed that its residents might have to do without the services of their library.

On September 27, after the acting superintendent of schools had proposed the closing of the Library and Museum, the Kalamazoo Gazette made the following points in an editorial:

For 99 years, the Kalamazoo public library system had served the community.

Now the big downtown library-museum and its branches on E. Main and on Portage at Washington Square are faced with the possibility of closure. And Bookmobile service may also be ended.

This potential cultural and educational tragedy--and it is nothing less than that--is in a sense ironical in that a main factor responsible for the library's growth and strength could be its undoing.

~~That is its affiliation with the Kalamazoo School District~~
That is its affiliation with the Kalamazoo School District from which it receives most of the money to pay its expenses.

Many attribute the millage failure in large part to the controversy over the racial balance plan, with its attendant busing, now functioning throughout the district schools by federal court order. And the public library, which in no way is involved in the dispute, has become a possible victim.

The editorial concluded by observing that the Public Library should be expected to bear its reasonable share of any school system cutbacks required because of a lack of money, but it seriously

questioned that "a complete shutdown because of a 7.8-mill tax rejection" was a reasonable share when the school district still received funds from twenty-three mills of local taxation plus State aid.

A fairly large number of Library users vigorously protested its threatened closing or drastic curtailing of services in "Letters to the Editor." A student of Central High School wrote:

There is a great need for change in this city and this country.

First, there needs to be a reorganization of priorities in this nation. Why should voters be able to tear apart an educational system, in which lies the future of this country, and not have a say as to how many bombs and other war materials are manufactured and used for purposes of destruction?

A ten-year-old girl expressed her concern: "I am outraged at the possibility of ^{the closing} down of the library, because reading is a very important part of life!"

Another Kalamazoo resident assured the editor that money could be saved ~~by~~

"... by the closing of that archaic, useless institution known as the public library which--scandalous as it may seem--is supported by property taxes which are supposed to go toward education. It might feasibly save us enough money to keep football alive in our schools."³⁸

By the end of September, many of the leaders of the Kalamazoo community realized that a \$3.5 million retrenchment in the schools' and library systems' budgets would be a disaster. A County Chamber of Commerce committee plumped for another millage election attempt and also did the necessary spadework in Lansing to obtain passage of a special legislative act permitting the taxes that would be voted in another election to be collected as part of the regular winter tax bill; for, according to State law, all taxes to be levied by school districts had to be reported to county officials by September 15. The Michigan Legislature acted quickly and

the bill granting this concession was signed into law by Governor William G. Milliken on Tuesday, November 16.³⁹

Six weeks earlier, on October 4, the Board of Education by unanimous action had set November 22 for a third millage try, the amount of millage to be asked for not ^{being} set at the time. Shortly after this action, a broadly-based Millage Steering Committee was formed in the community. The Kalamazoo Gazette and community agencies and groups strongly supported passage of this millage attempt. The paper stressed the need for a strong campaign and said that "Approval of the needed millage can be obtained if we all work for it together." ⁴⁰

On November 22 a record number of Kalamazoo School District voters, 21,158 of them, went to the polls to approve the school board's request for 7.8 mills additional tax for schools and Library. Slightly more than 12,000 voted in favor of the millage. When it became obvious that the millage would pass, Dr. Reed Hagen, acting superintendent of schools, exclaimed, "This is probably one of the greatest nights in Kalamazoo for all of us!" The millage committee's co-chairmen, Russel P. Kneen and F. Ward Brundage, who had also been part of the delegation that went to Lansing, were also delighted and elated, and so were the two new Board members.⁴¹

A month later Dr. Crum announced to the Board the restoration of Library services to former levels and the re-opening of the Alma Powell Library. In his report he outlined the resumption of a full slate of services, including a full schedule of hours, beginning on December 27, the lifting of a moratorium on book purchases and the return of the staff to its previous level.⁴²

It is idle to speculate what would ^{have} happened to the Library if this third millage try had not passed, but one wonders just how

severely its staff and services should have been cut. It is a foregone conclusion that there would have been no periodical and book purchases. The most heartening aspect of this crisis was the support that developed in the community for the Library when the chips were down. Although it is unlikely that the Library would have been closed, many believed that this was a very real possibility.

X

Another evidence of Kalamazoo's concern for its libraries, though of a lighter sort, was the case of East's psychedelic windows. The East Branch Library is located in a store building on East Main Street, and it is, as the Gazette's understatement put it, "no Taj Mahal." To some of the people who worked there, the library did not seem attractive, especially to the young. So an amateur artist decorated the Branch's front windows "with a gay and colorful border of loops, swirls and flowers." But some of the area's residents thought the windows looked psychedelic and lacked the dignity traditionally associated with libraries. One of them complained to the Board, who asked Crum to look into the matter. When he had, he agreed that the criticism was probably fair and the windows were scraped clean of their designs.⁴³

Whereupon Kalamazoo went up in the air. The Gazette came out with an editorial headed "Psychedelic Isn't Bad." Letters appeared in the paper from furious Library patrons denouncing "knuckling under to a single conservative critic," and charging that "the silent majority has only to nod to make our rabbit officials jump." Then Jean E. Lowrie, director of the School of Librarianship at Western Michigan University, wrote a letter to the paper commending its editorial. Dr. Lowrie wrote:

There is no question about the need to create a new image for public libraries in the country. Certainly any creative effort on the part of the staff or patrons to be innovative, to

entice people into the library, to attempt to serve the needs of this community (particularly the youth) should be encouraged. A storehouse is the last thing any public library should be.⁴⁴

The Library Journal called Crum, who by this time was quite weary of the tempest generated by East's windows, and asked for his comment on the numerous reports received on the incident, and later published a short article on the "Psychedelic Window at East Branch Library, Kalamazoo."⁴⁵

About three months after the beginning of the incident, the Gazette summed it up with the statement that "If there is one thing that the Case of the Psychedelic Window does say about Kalamazoo-- it's that they care enough about their libraries to fight for them."⁴⁶

And what public libraries, not only in Kalamazoo, but all over the nation need, are concerned citizens who will support and fight for them.

~~|||||~~
~~* The need for more concerned support of public libraries will be discussed more fully in the following chapter.~~

Chapter 15

NEW PROGRAMS, NEW LIBRARIES, PEOPLE AND CENTENNIAL

I

The Library Services Act, a high-water mark in the history of American libraries, became law in June 1956. The act was designed to stimulate greater effort by the states and local governments in providing good local public library service, but was limited to the development of service in rural areas. Then on February 11, 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Libraries Services and Construction Act, which broadened and strengthened the former law. This act made \$25 million dollars available for library service to both rural and urban populations and \$30 million for construction and equipment, sufficient money to build two good-sized branch libraries in each state.

As a result of these federal laws, steps were taken in Michigan which it hoped would provide better library service for the State.

On September 19, 1962, Michigan's First Governor's Conference on Libraries was held in Lansing, attended by over one thousand persons. The purpose of the conference was to obtain suggestions from those attending on (a) "the roles which citizens can

and should take in supporting and furthering better library service in Michigan," and (b) to stimulate interest and momentum among attendees that regional follow-up meetings will be held to get citizens into action on these suggestions in pursuit of better library service state-wide. Although the immediate results of the Governor's conference were not especially significant, it did encourage librarians throughout the State.¹

A month later the Board of Education, at Crum's request, held a special meeting to receive information about and an explanation of proposed State legislation, whose purpose was to encourage the development of area library systems in Michigan. After the ramifications of this legislation had been discussed at length, the Board decided to approve in principle the extension of library service to all the people of the State and to hold itself open to further discussions of the matter. Its hesitancy may be understood when one realizes the concern of its members that the services of the Kalamazoo Library might be diluted; they were reluctant to take any steps that might adversely affect the Library and the community it served.²

The State Library, with the aid of federal funds and encouraged by the intent of the federal law, now began to initiate measures which it hoped would lead to the improvement of library service in the State. In January 1965 the Kalamazoo Public Library was made a recipient of the Michigan periodical program, and it received 124 periodical titles, all of them indexed in Reader's Guide and having a cash value of around \$700.³

Then in July the Library received its first shipment of books under the Greenaway Plan, a development which enabled the State Library, using federal funds, to pay for contracts with major publishers under which they furnished the library with advance copies

of titles they were publishing; some publishers sent copies of every title, others did not. The titles that the State Library considered suitable for public libraries were sent ~~to sent~~ to these libraries; the others were disposed of to university and other libraries. Those receiving Greenaway books were not obligated to keep every title, but were not permitted to sell those they had rejected. The Greenaway Plan continued in operation for four or five years and was discontinued when federal money was no longer available. But while it was in operation, many Michigan libraries received a fair number of valuable books, books that they probably would not have acquired because of their high price.

The promotion of library cooperation and the establishment of library systems was one of the major objectives of federal legislation. The Kalamazoo Public Library consequently applied to the State Library for recognition as a library system, and on January 3, 1966, its director notified the Board that the application had been approved by the State Board of Libraries.⁴

II

A State law that was significant in the development of library service in Kalamazoo County was Public Act 59, which became effective on May 12, 1964. This act provided for the distribution of penal fines and their application to the support of public libraries and also authorized the appointment of county library boards to receive these fines. Whereupon the Board of Supervisors, now County Commissioners, of Kalamazoo County appointed a County Library^{Board}, with Alberta Brown as chairman, which was empowered to establish a new county library or contract with an existing library for services to those now unserved, approximately 30,000 in the county. Miss Brown, who was for many years the administrator of the Upjohn Library, has served as chairman of the board since 1964;

she is a strong believer in good library service and her leadership ~~of the county board~~ has been a strong factor in the establishment and improvement of countywide library service. At this time it was estimated that the county would be receiving between \$7,000 and \$8,500 as its share of penal fines.⁵

On November 15, 1965, an agreement was signed by the Kalamazoo Board of Education and the Kalamazoo County Library Board, which provided for limited library service to county residents, but also stipulated that additional services would be given in return for the payment of greater sums of money. Then on February 15 of the following year, the County Board of Supervisors allocated \$2,500 for the support of county library service. This was, as Crum said, a "first" of considerable significance. This amount added to the money the county board would be allotted from the distribution of penal fines would enable it to contract for more hours of service and for the purchase of books for use in the county bookmobile, which, according to the original plan, was to be used for county service six hours a week and then be available for use within the school district. The bookmobile was ordered in early 1966 and was delivered in October.⁶

The decision to begin county library service at Richland on November 9, from 3 to 5 p.m, was made on October 17. The schedule included stops at Cooper, Fulton and Scotts and one at the County Juvenile Home, with service on a two-week basis.

Three Library staff members and one Western Michigan University field student left for Richland on November 9, wondering what kind of reception they would receive. The trip "was complicated by a tremendous thunderstorm which played about the area all afternoon." The bookmobile arrived at its destination in a heavy downpour of rain, which, however, did little to dampen the spirits

of the people of Richland. A total of 156 registered and the circulation was 245. The response at the other towns was good too: 120 registered at Cooper, 106 at Fulton and 55 at Scotts. Those involved in the inauguration of this service felt that this was "one of the most exciting and rewarding periods in their lives."⁷

During the first three years of county bookmobile service the circulation totals were 11,525, 14,922 and 13,952. Most of the materials checked out were children's books.

For three years after the initiation of county library service, the bookmobile made only five stops in the county. But in February 1970, the County Board of Supervisors appropriated \$40,000 to the County Library Board for the purposes of expanding ~~the~~ bookmobile service and setting up a telephone system that would open up some of the resources of the Kalamazoo Public Library to the smaller libraries in the county. In the spring of 1970, Miss Brown of the County Library Board made the observation that the good reception of the bookmobile program was a major factor in generating interest among the county supervisors that led to the \$40,000 appropriation. The expanded county bookmobile service began on March 21, 1970, with twelve stops scheduled for the areas of the county not served by public libraries.

The popularity of the expanded schedule was reflected in the circulation totals: 27,371 for the year 1969/70 and 70,647 for 1971/72, even though only \$1,000 was spent for books.

The telephone service--a hookup with the Public Library, the second step in the enlargement of county library service, gives county librarians a place to go after they have exhausted their libraries resources. Its object is to open the resources of the Public Library to all legally established libraries in the county.

The services provided include answers to particular reference questions, loans of specific book titles, loans of materials or photocopies and a hot line connection with the State Library when materials are unavailable at the Public Library. The telephone service is much used and important to county residents and strongly supported by local librarians.

On September 25, 1972, another service--Books by mail--was begun; this is one of the first things being^{done} by the Library during the 1972/73 year of listening to the public. Books by mail is articulated with the Library's request service; no fines are charged, but if the books are not returned on time, there is no further service. The Library assumes all costs and tries to respond to all requests for books or subject material, whether given over the telephone, in person, or by mail.

In the past six years, countywide library service, which was envisioned fifty years ago by Flora B. Roberts, has come a long ways, but it still has not reached that stage of comprehensiveness that includes every resident of the county, nor are the resources of the Kalamazoo Library System ~~are not yet~~ available to the entire county. Crum has long been convinced that the county will not have the service that is desirable until all the resources of the library system are made "available to the entire county under a county-wide service contract financed by units of local government.

This way," he said, "there would be a greater financial base for support." But he has also been aware of the two stumbling blocks facing the extension of the kind of library service approaching adequacy for all county residents: finding the money to pay for it and convincing the smaller libraries that they will not lose their identity as part of a large system. Although one or two of their librarians felt that there was no driving need for

consolidation at the time, yet it is a real mark of progress that the relationship between the Kalamazoo Library System and the local libraries, according to Barbara Allen, extension librarian, is good and cordial.⁸

The lack of adequate financial support continues to keep the library system from achieving its potential. This, of course, is true of most public libraries in the nation, including the prestigious New York Public. In this day of ruthless competition for every tax dollar, libraries often fail to secure the financial support that is essential for their development and growth, because users of public libraries, so it would seem, are not as vocal and urgent in their representations to city and county officials as other users of the services furnished by local governmental units. And yet, if public libraries are to meet the demands generated by our complex twentieth-century civilization, they must have greater informational resources, and the personnel to service them.

The smaller libraries in any given community will never be able to meet these demands. Unless some way is found for them to unite their limited resources to those of a larger library in the area, many of the people in the United States will never have the opportunity to discover what good library service can do for them.

And money is not the only factor hindering the development of county-wide or regional library service. Many of those in charge of the small libraries resist their incorporation into a large system, fearing, as Crum and others have pointed out, that they and their libraries will lose their identity. The philosophy that the poet Longfellow reiterated, "Better be first in a little Iberian village than second in the city of Rome" still holds true.

III

When in 1960 Mark Crum recommended to the Board of Education that non-resident Library users pay the same amount for their card that school district users paid for their services, his recommendation was rejected, and non-residents continued to pay a fee of six dollars. Nine years later, however, the Board was ready to listen to Crum's proposal. The 1968/69 Library budget totaled \$855,865, and there were 35,170 current cards, which meant that \$24.33 was being spent to operate the Library for each card holder. As he made the recommendation that non-resident patrons of the Library pay a fee of \$24.33, Crum expressed the hope that a byproduct of the new fee policy would be progress toward a county-wide library system or contractual arrangements with neighboring towns.

The policy that was adopted by the Board in June 1969 made it clear that the new registration fee would not apply to children and that one card could be used by all the members of the household. The card that was issued is necessary for all Library services, including those of the Reference and Audio-Visual departments. Since then the non-resident Library fee has been increased several times and is now more than \$26.50.

Only one person spoke against the higher fee at the Board meeting in which the new policy was adopted. This individual, who was from Portage, admitted that Library service certainly was worth \$24.00, but added that many people couldn't afford this and he urged the Board to take steps to foster a county-wide library service. Edward Thompson, its president, then expressed the hope that the \$24-fee would ^{be a step} forward leading to county library service and that other governmental units in the county would join with Kalamazoo, so that all could have library service.

In an editorial supporting this new policy, the Kalamazoo

Gazette asked, "But, essentially, why should Kalamazoo School District taxpayers subsidize library service for non-tax-payers? It is a reasonable question," the editorial concluded.⁹

For many years the librarians of the Kalamazoo Public Library and other public libraries in the nation have been loath to refuse service to the users who were paying little or nothing toward the support of the library. And it has been quite generally true^{that} people who lived near a good public library felt that few if any restrictions should be placed upon their use of such a library. Statements such as, "You have the building and the books; it really won't hurt you if we use them too," have been made frequently.

In recent years, however, as pressure upon library materials and staff has become heavier due to greater demands by young people and others, librarians and library board have become more insistent that all library users provide their fare share of its support. But many non-taxpaying users and also county and township officials find this concept difficult to accept and often question the propriety of their being asked to pay for these services.

IV

Although it seems to be a rare occasion when a group outside the service area of a public library asks for assistance and service, this happened in the spring of 1964, when a group interested in bringing library service to Oshtemo Township was formed. This group called itself the Oshtemo Friends of the Library Association and comprised ten members, one of whom was Lillian Anderson, head of the Circulation Department of the Kalamazoo Library System. The Friends initiated the beginning of a book collection, checked on a building site, and investigated the possibilities of

contracting with another library. They met with the director of the Kalamazoo Library System in 1965, and were the first group to approach it formally with the intention of contracting for service.

Then in March 1966, they sent a letter to the Oshtemo Township Board asking for its support and aid in finding a building to house their book collection. The board was sympathetic and proposed the sum of \$3,000. to begin a library. The Oshtemo^{Library} Advisory Board was then appointed. On September 11 Crum met with the board to discuss specific details relating to costs, facilities and services. It had been decided that the library would be housed in the old Hurd School, the township board agreeing to repair the building and pay for the utilities, fuel and custodial care. The Kalamazoo Library System committed itself to furnish books, book processing and book loans and supplies, the library itself to be manned by volunteers from the township. Service began on November 15 and it was open sixteen hours a week.¹⁰

The Oshtemo Library has been an interesting and successful experiment in library evolution; the township looks upon it as the Oshtemo Township Branch and the library system as one of its branches, but so far no one has become precise about its status. The library system has matched the funds spent by the township and is now providing the funds for a paid administrator for the Oshtemo branch. The good will and cooperation of the township board is indicated by its willingness to buy non-resident library cards for the residents of the township who live outside the Kalamazoo School District, which had annexed the Oshtemo School District about 1965. Eventually, if the system of branches envisioned by Dr. Crum becomes a reality, the little Oshtemo Library probably will grow into the West Side Branch of the system.

V

In 1964 an article was printed in the Kalamazoo Gazette noting that there were 3,000 functional illiterates in Kalamazoo, many of whom were unable to obtain employment because of their inability to read and write. Mrs. Marian Spencer, an assistant in the Young Adult Department, believed that something should be done for these people. She discussed the problem with the library director, who agreed that a beginning should be made in the establishment of an adult reading center. By February 1965 it was under way.¹¹

The following July a proposal was sent to the Economic Opportunity Administration in Washington, D. C., for funds to expand the center. It was granted nearly \$30,000 in EOA funds, which were used to purchase reading materials, furniture and equipment designed to assist the illiterate or semi-illiterate in achieving a minimal degree of proficiency in his reading. Until the summer of 1966 the Adult Reading Center was operated as part of the Young Adult Department. Many of the activities in the center were directed toward the search for programmed and machine materials, for the matter suited for the adult illiterate was limited. In cooperation with the Kalamazoo branch of the American Association of University Women, a number of pamphlets were written and illustrated and then published by the Library.

The Adult Reading Center and its activities were terminated in December 1968. A request for funds from the federal government had been turned down and then the State asked for the return of all equipment worth more than a hundred dollars. Since the program was so short-lived, it is difficult to evaluate its efficacy, but while it lasted much use was made of its equipment and materials.¹²

VI

The people of Kalamazoo, in common with most Americans, were

deeply shocked and disturbed by the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. on April 4, 1968. Dr. King had had the confidence and respect of many Americans, regardless of race and creed, and they feared that his tragic death portended a deterioration in the already precarious relationships between the black and white races.

But there were those in Kalamazoo who were determined that the accomplishments of the constructive and courageous leadership of King should not be forgotten or lost. On the evening of April 5, James Gilmore attended a memorial service for Dr. King at the North Community Reformed Church, and made a presentation of \$2,500 to the Rev. B. Moses James to be used in whatever way he deemed suitable. Mr. Gilmore also promised to give an additional \$2,500 if other contributions matched his first donation.

James immediately had a committee appointed, later known as the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Fund Board. This committee went to work and by May 6, 1968, some \$3,000 had been given, plus Gilmore's \$5,000. Many people contributed to the fund, but to the Rev. James the most exciting gift was that received from two very small children who had had a Koolaid stand. The proceeds from this enterprise amounted to \$7.04 which they sent to him. The committee was anxious that the memorial to Dr. King should be a meaningful one and at the same time have real value for the community. After James had talked to dozens of people, he was told by James Fuller, a man he met in a barbershop, "You ought to build a library of black culture. Something that will live forever." His suggestion caught on and a black cultural library in memory of Dr. King came into being. On May 6, 1968, James presented to the Board of Education, on behalf of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Fund Committee, an \$8,000 gift to be used to purchase and

organize a collection of materials on black history, heritage and culture as a memorial to Dr. King.

The King Memorial Collection on Black Culture was dedicated on January 15, 1969; it consists of over 2,000 volumes and is housed in the Kalamazoo Public Library. Eventually it will contain books, periodicals, pamphlets, recordings, pictures and motion pictures which will publicize the culture, heritage and contributions of black peoples. The materials for the collection are chosen by the Book Selection Committee of the Kalamazoo Library System, and may be used by anyone within the Library free of charge and may be borrowed for home use on a patron's card. The King Memorial Fund Board will also issue a card good for the King Collection to any person not living in the Kalamazoo School District.

The program supporting this library is a continuing one, for the board realizes that the collection cannot achieve the comprehensiveness and breadth that is desirable unless it has the continued support of the community.¹³

VII

At its May 6, 1968 meeting, the Board of Education also received a gift of \$10,000 from an anonymous donor, the money to be used to start a branch library on the city's north side. The presentation was made by the director of the library system, who read a letter from the donor, in which the details of the facility to be established were outlined:

"The place: The poorest neighborhood.

"The building: A small new structure (or a renovated store or home if absolutely necessary to get started). There should be a small stage for rehearsal purposes, since we hope to include in the library activities work with such groups as a creative writing group, ... a drama group, possible art, music and dancing groups.

"Personnel: Public library branch standards, with considerable volunteer help.

"Book collection: Special selection by the public library in consultation with teachers and leaders of the Northside--children's and adult books. Processing to be done by the public library.

"Financing: We have thought of asking for foundation assistance in getting a building--and possibly other sources."

Members of the Board, in discussing the gift, said that they felt that they should not accept it until a suitable plan had been developed. Crum told them that the Friends of the Library could fill the "gap" between the Library and the donor in determining the needs of the north-side and how they could be met. The Board then voted to ask the Friends to study the situation and make recommendations on implementing the donor's conditions.¹⁴

About a year later, John Bright, chairman of the Friends, informed the Board that space had already been set aside for a library on the north-side in the Community School section of the Lincoln Elementary School, ~~and~~ that funds for the project would be raised by his organization, and that volunteers would staff the library from 9 a.m. to 9 p.m. He added that the Friends had undertaken the project because they felt that there was need on the north-side for a place where residents could get books and find a place to study. The Board approved the arrangements the Friends had made. The new library was to named for Alma Harrod Powell, who had joined the Public Library staff in 1946 and until the time of her death in 1967 had served at Lincoln School and East Branch Library. Mrs. Powell was noted as a story-teller and in 1957 had received a citation from the Michigan Library Association.¹⁵

The Alma Powell Memorial Library was opened to the public on September 28, 1969, and formally dedicated on October 12. Its book

collection was established by the Friends and the Board of Education, and donations for the books have come from the Friends and other private sources. Mrs. Mary Mace Spradling, who was on leave from the library system's Young Adult Department, served as head librarian, assisted by Mrs. Walter Jones, Jr.

The Powell Library was removed from the Lincoln School during the early summer of 1971, because it was obvious that it would never flourish there; its quarters were too close to the school and the Kalamazoo Community School and too noisy. A search was then begun for better facilities, which were found in the former Van Avery Drug Store on the corner of North Burdick and North Streets. The building was remodeled inside and out, and the result is an attractive and well-planned library, whose color scheme is delightful.

The library was opened for service in its new quarters on December 29, 1971. Occupying the place of honor is a portrait of Alma Powell. The first to be welcomed to the new library by ~~the~~ librarian Roberta Cheney was Alma Powell's great-granddaughter, Anne Davis. Among the crowd that attended the opening exercises were other members of the Powell family, school and Library officials and numerous citizens.

In expressing her pleasure over the library system's memorial to her mother, Mrs. Neal Davis said: "It's a real special feeling to know that other people realize what you already know. To me, she was superduper. She loved people, especially children."

Dr. Mark Crum, director of libraries, observed that this library embodies pride and power. Then he continued:

The presence of this library here has little to do with tax dollars. Everything you see here--the books, the furniture, the carpeting, the rental for the building itself--all were given to the people of Kalamazoo by individual donors and by the smaller foundations and funds.

Gift funds, Crum added, had made possible the reopening of the library. Of the \$69,778 branch operating expense, \$29,000 was given~~ed~~ by seven donors, all of whom asked to remain anonymous. State aid provided another \$10,887 and \$32,891 came from the portion of the school district operating budget assigned for Library operations.¹⁶

The Alma Powell Memorial Library is being operated as a branch of the Kalamazoo Library System, but since it is located in a primarily black community, it probably will continue to be a black library, though service is given to all who enter its doors. Community reception has been enthusiastic; the library is excellently maintained and practically no vandalism has been experienced. During the period from December 29, 1971 to June 30, 1972, book circulation totaled 3,569 and 5,995 people used the library; many groups have visited it. Surprisingly, there were more adult users than expected and fewer children.

The other two branches in the library system are those of East and Washington Square. The latter has been housed in a beautiful building for nearly fifty years, a ~~structure that~~ continues to be adequate for the demands placed upon it. But a new or another building is urgently needed for the East Branch. It is used by three hundred to four hundred people a week and the circulation for 1971/72 totaled 45,000. Patronage undoubtedly would be heavier if the library were more comfortable and less cluttered.

For a decade or more Dr. Crum has advocated more branches, which essentially would be neighborhood libraries or neighborhood book distribution centers. He has envisioned a network of libraries, which would be located in the commercial shopping centers of metropolitan Kalamazoo. The Friends of the Library were asked a few years ago to conduct an information campaign, but its only result

was the Powell Library, and it was financed by non-public funds.

Kalamazoo today has a number of large shopping centers, most of which would be ideal locations for branch libraries. In any given community served by a public library there are always individuals who will patronize the library, even though it may be inconvenient to get to it; on the other hand, there are many to whom the library is not all that important; they must be enticed and encouraged to sample its offerings. The modern shopping centers are so convenient, ~~and~~ so capable of meeting most of the needs and wants of their patrons, and parking is also accessible and easy, that many people frequent the down-town area less and less often. If there were a library facility in these centers, it is possible that many of the patrons of these centers might be led to investigate its materials and services. It is unfortunate that neither the funds nor the inclination for implementing Crum's suggestions have been forthcoming. Hopefully, if the Powell Library continues to be a successful branch, it may give the impetus to the establishment of other branch libraries.

Today ~~more~~ public librarians are beginning to realize that if public libraries are to serve the people, they must go where the people are. This concept was put into practice by Lorna Chapman, East Branch librarian, and a member of her staff during the summers of 1969, 1970 and 1971. They drove a "horn-tooting, rock-music-playing bookladen Volkswagen" through the the north and east side streets of city until they saw a group of children. Then the "buchwagen " stopped and the children were invited to look through the books and select the ones they would like to read. A week later the vehicle stopped in the same location, picked up the borrowed books and gave the children the opportunity to get more.

The program was financed through donations.

In describing it, Mrs. Chapman said, "It's a new trend in librarianship." She preferred this approach rather than "waiting for them to come to you--because they never will." And that is expressing the truth in a nutshell.¹⁷

VIII

Marian Schrier, the last of the librarians to have worked in the Kalamazoo Public Library since the early days of Flora B. Roberts, retired on December 2, 1971. Miss Schrier began her library career in 1926 at the old Portage Branch and had been in charge of the Washington Square Branch since 1939, being its third head. When the present building was opened for service in 1926, she was given the honor of checking out the first book, because she was the youngest member of the staff.

During the past decade, four of the "old-timers have retired, all of them having direct or indirect ties with the early days of the Library.

Eleanor Ricker, who had been a member of the staff for thirty-one years, first as Director of Extension and Specialist in Public Relations and head of the East Branch since 1951, retired in June 1960. Miss Ricker was a capable librarian and a person of strong opinions and decided convictions, and one who had a concerned interest in the welfare of the Library until her death on February 9, 1963. She admired Miss Roberts greatly and complemented her successfully.

On August 31, 1968, Jeanetta Sagers, who had been head of the Reference Department since 1942, having succeeded Jeanne Griffin, resigned. She had joined the staff in 1927. Since her retirement, Miss Sagers has assisted occasionally in the little library of Paw Paw, Michigan, where she has lived for many years.

Lillian Anderson, who knows more of the "good old days" of the Library, having begun working there in 1922, retired in the spring of 1969; she remembers having seen Isabella C. Roberts and worked under Flora B. Roberts for twenty years. Even though she is retired, Miss Anderson keeps very busy; she is a volunteer worker at the Oshtemo Library and has charge of publicity at the First Presbyterian Church Library. She is also a member of the Kalamazoo County Library Board, her term expiring in 1974.¹⁸

Flora M. Champion, who joined the staff as book mender in 1942, retired in the summer of 1972. For thirty years Mrs. Champion had given able and faithful direction to the book mending and preparation division of the Technical Processing Department of the Library. As early as 1937 she had taught book repairing in the school system.

Janet Teale, who began working at the Library part-time in 1929, plans to retire in June 1973. Six years later she was appointed to a full-time position, and for many years she was assistant head of the Circulation Department. When Miss Teale retires, Mrs. Lodisca Alway, head of the Circulation Department, will be the last member of the staff who had worked under Flora B. Roberts.

Two of the members of the staff of the Library, Shirley Miller, a member of the Reference Department, and Mary Mace Spradling, head of the Young Adult Department, published books during 1971.

Miss Miller's book, The Vertical File and Its Satellites, is a comprehensive and practical "handbook of acquisition, processing and organization," and should be of great value to anyone interested in developing a modern and useful vertical file. Mrs. Spradling's work, In Black and White: Afro-Americans in Print, is a "guide to Afro-Americans who have made contributions to the United States of America from 1619 to 1969." It contains their names, their contributions, references to the books, magazines and newspapers where

information about them was found and an index arranged by occupation and/or calling.

IX

The Kalamazoo Public Library celebrated its centennial as a public library on October 12, 1972. The observance was sponsored by the Friends of the Kalamazoo Public Library and Museum, under the leadership of Isadore Turansky. During the evening an open house was held at the main library which permitted the guests to tour the building. The program, which followed, featured the history of the Kalamazoo Public Library from its earliest beginnings in 1845 to the present by Walter H. Siemsen, former head of its Cataloging Department. Then followed a short talk by Dr. John Fopeano of the Academy of Medicine, the unveiling of the refurbished portraits of Dr. and Mrs. E. H. Van Deusen by Museum director Alexis Praus, and comments on the future of the Library by Dr. Mark Crum, director of libraries.

In his remarks Crum outlined the three directions that the Kalamazoo Library System might take. These are the fantastic future, the faint-hearted future and the possible future. Of the third one he said:

Now that we face the future which might be... if we put it to a vote of the people as a millage issue perhaps combining the resource generated in that way with other funds...we could substantitally enrich the contents of this library to meet the informational, educational, research, aesthetic appreciation and reference needs of its users.

Again, if we mounted a campaign for it, we could ask public approval of a bond issue to build, rent, and furnish and equip a network of branches in the suburban centers.

Then Crum concluded with a prediction for the future:

These are the directions in which the library will develop whenever it does. These are the pathways to the future.

The question is whether we can have these relatively soon while we and our children are alive to use them and benefit from them, or whether it will be another century, or the best part of it to achieve them. 19

During the centennial year, the Friends of the Kalamazoo Public Library and Museum will concentrate on a centennial book gift. As Mr. Turansky, their president, noted:

The library system contains a quarter of a million books, thousands of museum items and tens of thousand periodicals, documents, pictures, maps, recordings and films. Yet the collection is not able to meet fully the demands being made upon it by the adults, students and children of the school district.

After his statement there followed a ten-page list of many of the unmet needs which the Library and Museum users have for books and other information or exhibit materials. The help of their patrons in meeting any of these needs is being solicited by the Friends.

The Kalamazoo Public Library has come a long ways since those days when it had less than 3,000 volumes, housed in two small closets in a small room in Old City Hall. Its past has been an illustrious one; may its future see even greater achievements, greater resources and greater opportunities for service.

EPILOGUE

I

The past century and a half have brought tremendous changes to the area called Kalamazoo; in 1820 only the aborigines, wild animals and one or two French traders haunted the site. Today it is a modern city, with a population exceeding 85,000 and that of its metropolitan area probably 30,000 or more greater, and noted for its diversified industries and cultural, educational and medical institutions. It is the city's proud boast, and with considerable justification, that "Life is good in Kalamazoo." The heterogeneous elements in its population have been blended into a community that is quite successful in living and working together. The racial and social climate of the city is relatively calm and stable.

Although there have been racial disturbances and deeply-felt disagreements on educational policies, Kalamazoo was spared the race riots that engulfed other cities. As a backward look is taken, one must admit that it is regrettable that no serious or far-ranging plans were made to incorporate members of the Negro race into the business and educational life of the community until the black people demonstrated and asserted themselves. Possibly more of them should be employed in the shops and stores of down-town Kalamazoo, but it is obvious to the observer that there are more than there were five years ago.

Not too many vestiges of the city as it was a hundred or 125 years ago remain. During the past seventy-five years one after the other of the old landmarks have been razed. It may not be feasible, yet one could wish that a number of the old buildings still standing on Michigan, Portage and Water Streets could be

repaired and renovated, with their middle-nineteenth-century exteriors left unchanged, and put to modern uses. Perhaps Kalamazoo, like some other old cities, should organize a Civic Trust to preserve a few of the old structures and landmarks that are still in fair condition and thus provide continuity between the past and present.

For nearly 150 years constructive leadership and cooperation between its various segments have characterized community life in Kalamazoo. There have, of course, been setbacks and instances of selfish leadership; yet in times of crisis its citizens have usually rallied to do what civic pride and common sense indicated should be done. Its educational system, both private and public, and its four institutions of higher learning are examples of the city's growth and progress.

Kalamazoo College, whose existence and future were frequently in grave doubt during its first sixty years, is today a thriving and prestigious institution. Its campus covers fifty-two acres, with over twenty buildings, and the enrollment of the school is nearly 1,400. It is a pioneer in year-round education (the Kalamazoo Plan) and is committed to academic excellence; its endowment exceeds \$13 million. The college's new library, which was completed in 1967, was named the Upjohn Library in appreciation of the combined leadership the Upjohn family, the company and its employees have given to the school. It contains over 150,000 volumes, with room for a hundred thousand more, and more than nine hundred periodicals and has study facilities for seven hundred students.

Nazareth College, which began as an academy with two small buildings seventy-five years ago, has developed into a modern and

progressive school for young women, with an enrollment of about 450. In 1966 the college began a five-year \$11-million campus expansion plan, which was designed to provide for new dormitories, a new library, student center and an ultra-modern chapel.

Western Michigan University, which had its beginnings nearly seventy years ago in some of the classrooms of old Central High School as Western State Normal or Western State Teachers College, is a large university with a 1972 fall enrollment of over 21,000. It was given university status in 1957. Its eastern campus hasn't changed much in recent years, but the western one has spread over many acres and comprises many modern buildings. The resources of the university's library, the Dwight B. Waldo Library, include more than a half a million books plus many other materials.

Kalamazoo Valley Community College is the fourth institution of higher education in the area; it was established in 1966 by vote of the electors in the district and instruction began in 1968. It has a 187-acre campus, which is located five miles west of the city, ^{an} enrollment of over 4,000. The college offers a wide range of university-parallel and career curriculums and features special programs and staff to serve students from low-income minority backgrounds.

II

In retrospect, although there have been crises and reverses and even though its growth has at times been painfully slow, the Kalamazoo Public Library has made remarkable progress in the last two decades and during the past century. It is true that it has not attained the potential its directors, staff and friends have hoped for, but as the Library begins its second century, it seems to be on course for greater achievements and further advances.

And yet, if it is to be an institution capable of responding more effectively to the requirements of a complex and sophisticated society, it must have more books, more recordings, more films, more framed pictures, more branches and more personnel, but above all, and this holds true for nearly all public libraries, there need to be new ideas, more research and imaginative programs. A situation that is critical for most public libraries is their inability to reach more than one-third of the people in their service areas. Those who never darken a library's door have nothing against it; they simply are not aware of what a library can do for them. If libraries are to move forward, even though more materials are desirable and essential, it is imperative that ways are found of enlarging their clientele.

Then there is the problem of insufficient financial support. In common with other educational and service institutions, public libraries are affected by inflated costs and severe competition for every tax dollar, but, as the editor of Library Journal pointed out, "Libraries have never, however, been able to compete effectively with schools, or for that matter with other local services to get a fair share of the local tax dollar."¹ Evidently their share is not sufficient to keep libraries in a flourishing condition. Many of them are in trouble; the New York Public Library is a recent example. World famous artists staged a benefit for it on January 1, 1972, that raised over \$100,000, and about a year later a second one was held which featured a debate between William F. Buckley, Jr. and John Kenneth Galbraith, with Art Buchwald as moderator.²

Art galleries, museums, opera companies and symphony orchestras have long been the recipients of massive assistance from

private individuals and funds, but rarely, especially in later years, have public libraries been thought of as deserving of such largess and support. The Genevieve and Donald Gilmore Art Center of the Kalamazoo Institute of Arts is an outstanding illustration of what this kind of liberality can accomplish for a cultural institution. Although private means should not be expected to take care of the day-by-day/operational expenses, they could make the difference between a fair and a good library. The Alma Powell Memorial Library exemplifies what non-public funds can do for library service.

Even if significant amounts of this type of help were forthcoming, libraries like the Kalamazoo Library System, if they are to continue growing and develop new programs of service, must find a broader financial base. A generation or two ago our countryside was dotted with little schoolhouses; today they stand empty and unused, but in almost every little town there is a consolidated school. Perhaps the day of little libraries is not past, but a small library by itself cannot be effective; its resources must be united to those of a larger facility, which in turn needs the base supplied by the smaller units.

Legislators are beginning to understand, what librarians have known for a long time, that consolidation and cooperation is the key to better libraries and broader library service. In the spring of 1971, a bill was introduced into the House of Representatives of the Michigan Legislature providing for the establishment of library regions and for State aid to public libraries in such regions. However, no action was taken on this bill. More recently Dr. Mark Crum, president-elect of the Michigan Library Association, drafted "A State Bill on Metropolitan Library

Corporations or 'Authorities',...which would permit the residents of counties or standard metropolitan statistical areas in Michigan to create library authorities to supply, finance, and administer public library service." This plan is being considered by Michigan librarians and their reaction has been generally favorable.

What reception this draft, or a similar one will be given in the Michigan Legislature, is, of course, uncertain; but the prospects are fair that eventually a bill will become law that will facilitate the establishment of larger and more inclusive library regions, which will lead to broader financial bases and more meaningful library cooperation.

Important changes in the financing of elementary and secondary education may also be in the offing, including that of library service, especially those libraries which are part of school systems. The decision of the California Supreme Court in the fall of 1971 that the financing of public education primarily by property taxes was discriminatory and hence unconstitutional, may change the entire concept of public school funding. The supreme courts of a number of other states have made similar decisions. And as President Richard M. Nixon noted in his message to Congress on January 20, 1972:

While these cases have not been reviewed by the Supreme Court we cannot ignore the serious questions they have raised for our States, for our local school districts, and for the entire nation.

What implications does this have for public libraries? A month after President Nixon gave his address, the Library Journal made a number of pertinent observations:

For libraries an alternative tax base would have many advantages. Long at the bottom of municipal priority lists, libraries have been among the leaders in decades of searching for other sources of funds. The library movement has

achieved substantial success obtaining federal and state aid...

It is obvious then, that any federal proposal to strengthen the tax base for local educational services ought to include libraries and that librarians and trustees ought to be among the leaders in the development proposals...

Rather than to wait for the enactment of new tax proposals, and the subsequent announcement of the answers to our questions, the library movement ought to begin immediately to develop its own set of proposals to be added to the input of other educational agencies and bodies on alternatives to the property tax...

We must tell our government that libraries, like other educational institutions, will have a voice in new proposals for their support.³

Whatever the changes may be that will occur in the tax structures of federal and state governments, it is certain that they will have their impact on the Kalamazoo Library System.

Even though modifications in tax structures and legislation authorizing the organization of library regions or metropolitan library corporations may be postponed, the realization that the millage crises of 1971 brought to many of the residents of the Kalamazoo School District that the library system must have more support and a broader financial base is encouraging for the future of the Library. Hopefully this recognition and Dr. Crum's leadership as president of the Michigan Library Association will be productive of improvements in the organization of local library service and of the State as a whole. These probably will not be as broad and far-reaching as librarians would prefer, but in the world of libraries spectacular developments are infrequent.

Notes

Most of the materials consulted for this history of the Kalamazoo Library System are found in its Local History Collection.

The following abbreviations will be used in these notes:

Board Proceedings--Proceedings of the Kalamazoo Board of Education.

Annual report--Annual reports of the head librarian or director of the Public Library.

Monthly reports--Monthly reports of the above.

Gazette--The Kalamazoo Gazette. Most of the later citations from the Gazette, especially as they pertain to the history of the Library are taken from the library scrapbooks and will be cited Gazette, date and volume of the scrapbook and pagination if available.

Statesman--Michigan Statesman, the predecessor of the Kalamazoo Gazette.

Telegraph--The Michigan and later the Kalamazoo Telegraph; its daily issues will be cited as Daily Telegraph.

Chapter 1

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3. Telegraph, March 17, 1886, p. 5; November 28, 1888, p. 5; January 13, 1886, p. 5; August 21, 1895; Daily Telegrap , January 5, 1880.
4. Telegraph, August 18, 1875; June 14, 1882; September 22, 1886, p. 1; August 25, 1875; August 28, 1878.
5. Telegraph, December 26, 1888, p. 5; January 20, 1875; July 12, 1876; February 20, 1889, p. 5; October 15, 1901, p. 3; Daily Telegraph, January 5, 1880.
6. Michigan Pioneer Collections, v. 12, p. 162, 163; Telegraph, July 9, 1901, p. 5.

Nov. 20th 1892
Nov. 21st 1892.

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7. Michigan Pioneer Collections, v. 18, p. 660-661.
8. Telegraph, August 27, 1873; January 13, 1886, p. 5.
9. Telegraph, August 6, 1873; Thomas's Kalamazoo Directory and Business Advertiser for 1867 and 1868 (Kalamazoo, 1867), p. 12, 13.
10. Quarter Centennial Celebration of the Settlement of Kalamazoo (Kalamazoo, 1855), p. 54, 55.
11. Telegraph, March 5, 1884, p. 7; Quarter Centennial Celebration, p. 49, 50.
12. Telegraph, July 12, 1876; August 12, 1875 (Address of E. Lakin Brown)
13. Telegraph, September 9, 1874 (Address of H. G. Wells); August 18, 1875 (Address of E. Lakin Brown)
14. Quarter Centennial Celebration, p. 17.
15. Telegraph, August 18, 1875 (Paper by A. D. P. Van Buren)
16. Telegraph, August 2, 1871; February 21, 1883, p. 3.
17. Telegraph, August 18, 1875.
18. Telegraph, August 18, 1875; Weisert, p. 150; Telegraph, July 12, 1876.
19. Telegraph, July 12, 1876 (Address by Pratt; July 9, 1884, p. 6, 7.
20. Telegraph, January 27, 1886, p. 3; July 12, 1876; September 9, 1874.
21. Telegraph, July 12, 1876 (Address by Pratt); March 17, 1886, p.5.
22. Telegraph, September 16, 1874 (Address by Henry Little)
23. Gazette, December 26, 1966.
24. Telegraph, August 18, 1875; March 7, 1883, p. 1; August 20, 1890, p. 5.
25. Telegraph, May 19, 1886, p. 5; March 13, 1889, p. 7; September 8, 1894, p. 11; April 24, 1900, p. 3; Thomas's Kalamazoo Directory, p. 16.
26. Thomas's Kalamazoo Directory, p. 12.
27. Quarter Centennial Celebration, p. 10; Gazette, June 30, 1854; Telegraph, March 7, 1883, p. 1; September 9, 1874.
28. Telegraph, July 12, 1876.
29. Statesman, June 4, 1836; Telegraph, August 2, 1871; September 8, 1894 (50th anniversary ed.); November 14, 1899, p. 6; Liber C, p. 393 and Liber 6, p. 231 of Kalamazoo County land records.
30. Gazette, February 4, 1837, p. 2; Thomas's Directory, 1869-1870, p. 55, 62.
31. Quarter Centennial Celebration, p. 50, 51.
32. Telegraph, July 18, 1888, p. 6.
33. Statesman, January 9, 1836; August 6, 1836; Telegraph, October 13, 1897, p. 1; August 19, 1891, p. 5, 6; November 14, 1899, p. 6; William Edward Conners, The Organization, Operation, and Growth of the Kalamazoo District Public Land Office at Kalamazoo, Michigan, from 1834-1859 (Kalamazoo, 1957), p. 13, 17.
34. Statesman, October 30, 1835; November 6, 1835.
35. Telegraph, June 15, 1892, p. 8; March 13, 1889, p. 7.
36. Telegraph, May 24, 1900, p. 3.
37. Statesman, June 6, 1835.
38. Statesman, June 24, 1834.
39. Statesman, September 10, 1835.
40. Statesman, February 21, 1835, p. 2.
41. Statesman, March 7, 1835; Telegraph, March 19, 1884, p. 5.
42. Telegraph, August 18, 1875.
43. Statesman, November 6, 1835, p. 3; January 2, 1836, p. 3; Gazette, August 26, 1837, p. 2.

Indulgent review. I agree.

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45. Statesman, August 6, 1836, p. 4; April 2, 1836.
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51. Statesman, April 2, 1836.
52. Statesman, April 2, 1836; Gazette, April 15, 1837, p. 2.
53. Gazette, Spril 15, 1837, p. 2.
54. Statesman, March 14, 1835.
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57. Gazette, March 11, 1837, p. 3.
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63. Michigan Pioneer Collections, v. 18, p. 600.
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5. Telegraph, July 4, 1883, p. 9; September 6, 1876; Gazette, May 25, 1855.
6. Gazette, January 23, 1837, p. 3; Telegraph July 4, 1883, p. 9.
7. Gazette, May 5, 1838; Telegraph, September 6, 1876.
8. Charles True Goodsell and Willis Frederick Dunbar, Centennial History of Kalamazoo College (Kalamazoo, 1933), p. 1-35, passim.
9. "An Act to Provide for the Organization and Support of Primary Schools" in Acts of the Legislature of the State of Michigan, passed at the annual session of 1837, sec. 1, 2, 4, 8, 5, 6, 12, 13, 20, 21, 34, p. 116-118, 121, 124.
10. G. M. Walton, Libraries in Michigan, an Historical Sketch (Lansing, 1926, supplement to v. 17 of the Michigan Library Bulletin), p. 25.
11. Walton, p. 40.
12. Gazette, January 26, 1837, p. 3.
13. Statesman, March 19, 1836, p. 2.
14. Gazette, February 17, 1837, p. 3.
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Chapter 3

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3. Gazette, May 19, 1848; Telegraph, September 9, 1874; July 9, 1884, p. 7.
4. Gazette, April 20, 1849.
5. Gazette, December 1, 1848.
6. Telegraph, July 2, 1873.
7. Gazette, January 30, 1843.
8. Gazette, April 28, October 6, 1843.
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10. Gazette, February 8, 1850; Thomas's Kalamazoo Directory, 1867-1868, p. 36.
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12. Gazette, July 13, 1849, p. 2; January 24, 1851.
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